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issue

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Christmas No 1998

The Illustrated London News

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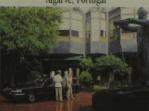
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Christmas Supplements swung into life in 1848.

CLIVE ARROWSMITH/CAMERA PRESS



With her thoroughly modern approach to dance, Darcey Bussell, seen here wearing a Philip Treacy hat, has brought a breath of fresh air to British classical ballet. This Christmas she will be starring on several London stages (see page 56): in the Royal Ballet's Cinderella and Romeo and Juliet, at the new Sadler's Wells and the Festival Hall. Ms Bussell's autobiography is this season's must-have book for ballet aficionados. *Darcey Bussell—Life in Dance* is published by Century, £17.99.

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Above, first glass art. Left, London, city of angels.



10

Don't miss capital fun such as the Trafalgar Square tree.



28

Create a sensation with Lorna Wing's tiny Christmas puddings and Angela Hale's jewels.



150 Years of Christmas

The Illustrated London News started a tradition in 1848 when it produced the first Christmas Supplement, blazing the trail for the many special publications which are now as much part of the festive scene as cards and carols, pudding and mince pies.

As newspapers slip through our letterboxes with increasingly heavy thuds it seems that every publication comes with a supplement for the festive season on that. Who is the culprit behind this smouldering onslaught of literature? Step forward *The Illustrated London News*, which 150 years ago produced the first-ever Christmas Supplement—a 16-page issue attached to the regular edition of the paper. Revolutionary for its time, it is now impossible to imagine Christmas without such special

seasonal add-ons. As for the *ILN* itself, it began a tradition that has been continued up to the present and is considered as much a part of the Christmas festivities as presents and pudding.

The first *ILN* Christmas issue, in 1848, proved quite a departure from the paper's usual diet of

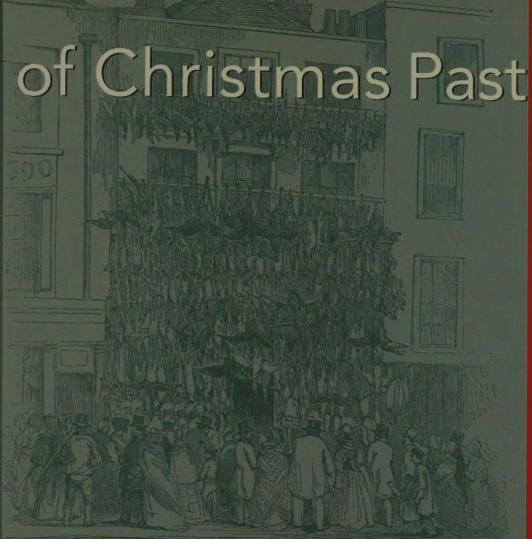
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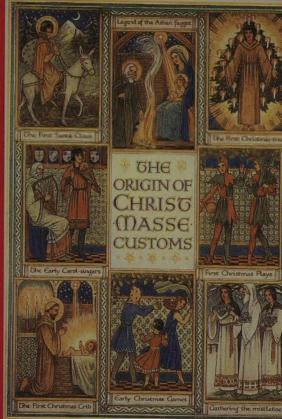
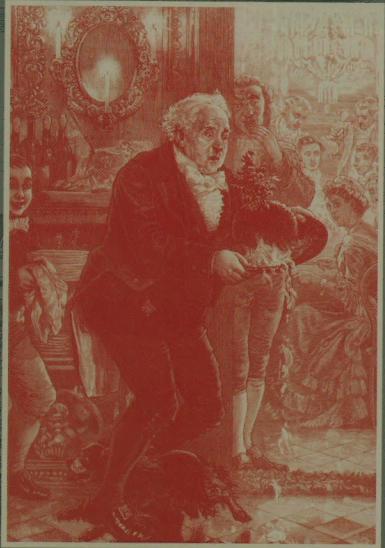
Festive Fare

Seven years after its first Christmas issue, the *ILN* made a further step forward by publishing its first "coloured" supplement, which caused enormous impact at the time. Christmas celebrations have long centred on the Christmas dinner, usually some kind of poultry, seen, above right, on sale in Holborn Hill, London, and, below, being collected from the baker's oven where many families took their bird to be cooked, their own ovens being too small to accommodate it.

The Spirit of Christmas Past



Christmas pudding was central to Victorian festivities: in *The Pudding in Peril* (1876), disaster had to be averted. We are told "a little sleight of hand and it maintains its menaced equilibrium. The glory of the Christmas dinner is secured!"



Traditions



Top, this set of colour engravings from the *ILN* of 1923 describes the origin of various Christmas customs such as the arrival of St Nicholas, the original Santa Claus, on a white ass, and Martin Luther, said to be the first person to decorate a fir tree with candles, to symbolise the stars.

Above, an illustration from the *ILN*'s 1924 Christmas number depicting the legend of holly: it is only at Christmas that the "Little People" are able to join humans, and they frequently do so beneath this festive tree.



In 1842 the whole family gathered round excitedly to watch the removal of the plum pudding from its long boil in the copper.

hard-hitting news stories, providing its writers with the opportunity to reflect and its artists with the space for some nostalgic imagery. Just how the Victorian Christmas has thrived over the intervening years is evident from the magazine's choice of subject matter: most of the topics covered will still be appearing in the Christmas supplements of 1996. One article, for instance, explores the best ingredients for plum pudding, roaming through the lemon peel, raisins and spices before enquiring "I have often wondered who invented Plum Pudding. It is doubtless to a woman that the world is indebted for this glorious discovery. I see her in my mind's eye at this moment, 'fair, fair and 40'." Elsewhere the paper discourses on Christmas carols, hamper and punch, while another section explores Christmas sports and party games such as Kissing under the Mistletoe for which the following advice is offered: "It is to be delicately done. It is an excellent sport when the right lips meet; and as such gives Christmas its paramount interest above all popular festivals whatsoever."

Already, in 1848, the commercialisation of Christmas was being lamented. A writer who signs himself "The Oldest Inhabitant," complains that "thirty or 40 years ago...people knew it was Christmas without being told so by advertisement". He then proceeds to rail against the moon, largely in the poaching business from established concerns, noting that "the old shopkeepers have been gradually compelled to resort to something like publicity to keep up their custom".

His following observation adds a touch of prophetic irony: while "honest Tottenham Court Road docks herself out with attractions never thought of at any other time... Regent Street is too proud to show any symptoms of rejoicing at Christmas and Oxford Street would scorn to be too Christmas-like."

But *The Illustrated London News* can claim an even more significant "first": it was in the pages of this Christmas Supplement that Brions saw their first image of a Christmas tree. This engraving of Queen Victoria and her family beside the tree at Windsor took the nation by storm and started a world-wide craze that, 150 years on, shows no sign of abating. Christmas trees were first noted by a visitor to Strasbourg in 1605 who wrote that the city's inhabitants "have fir trees in their rooms, all decorated with paper roses, apples, sugar, gold and wafers". In Britain the first-known Christmas tree was that of German-born Queen Charlotte, who in 1800 decorated a yew tree with almonds, fruits and toys and illuminated wax candles to the

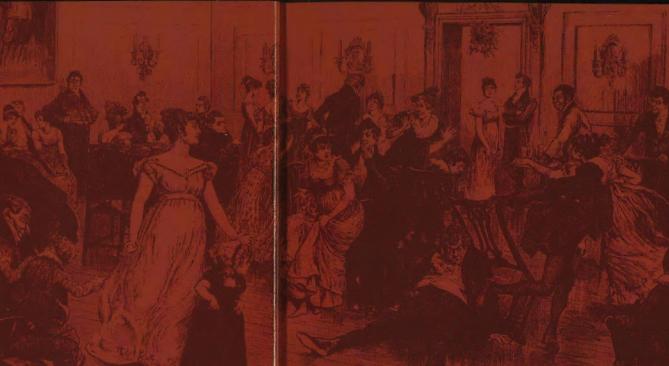
huge delight of the assembled royal children. Decorated trees soon became a regular sight in residences such as Kensington Palace and the Brighton Pavilion, but it was not until the appearance of the *ILN* image that the trees were to spread beyond royal walls. Like the little rustics who "gazed with rapture and awe" when admitted to the castle to view "the Wonder Tree", Britain's new middle-class swiftly adopted the idea as their own. Young families with bonbonnières, gilt gingerbread and lighted candles took the country by storm and soon crossed the Atlantic: the USA's first recorded tree appeared in 1855.

Today, the 1848 Christmas Tree is one of the most popular images from the *The Illustrated London News* Picture Library, the publication's archives, which date back to its launch issue of 1842. Along with photographs of the Queen Mother and images of the *Titanic*, there is a constant stream of requests for reproductions of this image from other publications around the world—and especially from Germany and America.

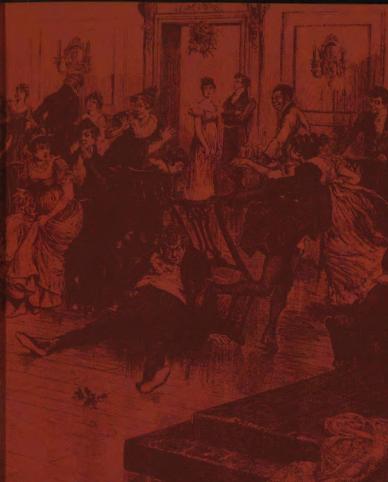
While much of the 1848 Christmas Issue is surprisingly timeless, certain articles anchor it firmly in its era. It opens in the true Victorian spirit, with a feature on Christmas Morality which recalls the "man hard buffeted by the world...to whom Christmas is but the remembrance of distress, and the shadow of approaching calamity" and urges the rich man—by implication the reader—towards hospitality and good fellowship.

But the supplement closes on a cheerful note, with the *Comical Christmas Chronicle*, a cluster of spoof advertisements that were the *Private Eye* Christmas catalogue of their day. Among these, The Gallery of Practical Science offers a machine to help historical novelists trot out their books, touted as "something between a coffee-mill and a chaff-cutter". A number of works are put into the hopper, such as books on costume, and old chronicles, and then turning the handle, these are cut to pieces, and reproduced as three-volume works. The heroes and heroines are then put in by hand, and the novel is complete. "Meanwhile" after Railway Spotters, Agents Don and Cleatman advertise forthcoming applications for the following routes: Liverpool/New York, Heme Bay/The Moon and Falkstone/Boulogne (submarine). A tongue-in-cheek look ahead to the forthcoming year's social calendar notes: "Wonderful event: all the theatres in London are full on the same evening, and actually cover their expenses."

Whatever the developments of the past 150 years, it is clear that the essential character of the Londoner remains unchanged. That the metropolitans of 1848 already considered themselves a cut above their country cousins is evident in the matter-of-fact observation that London is "not merely a city: it may be called a nation", to the ideas for raising money in the New Year as put forward by the *Londoner*: "Persons with a little spare time on their hands continue to amuse themselves, in provincial towns, by paying attention to everybody's business but their own. A small fortune, without risk, may be obtained by bestowing one quarter of the care upon their own affairs that they bestow upon others. No Londoner need apply." While we may no longer recognise the holly carts and roaming minstrels in snowy city streets as evoked by celebrated artists such as Leech and Birket Foster, at least, in those pages of 150 years ago, we can still see ourselves.



The *ILN* traces the development of traditional family entertainment at Christmas. Top, a game of musical chairs in 1895 could result in a lady finding herself on the lap of an embarrassed gentleman, or another participant landing in a heap on the floor. Bottom, a quieter form of activity, in 1858, was the magic lantern, and a source of fascination for both adults and children. By 1922, the latest novelty was the wireless receiving set, round which the party would gather, right, to listen. A quarter of a century on, television was the focus of attention in the most up-to-date drawing rooms, above.



Entertainment

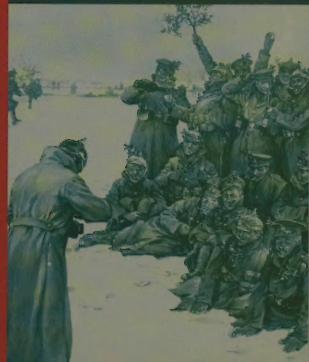
The first recorded image of a Christmas cracker appeared in the *ILN* in 1847. Until the early years of this century crackers often followed a topical theme, alluding, for example, to suffragettes, Darwin or Leap Year (complete with miniature wedding rings).

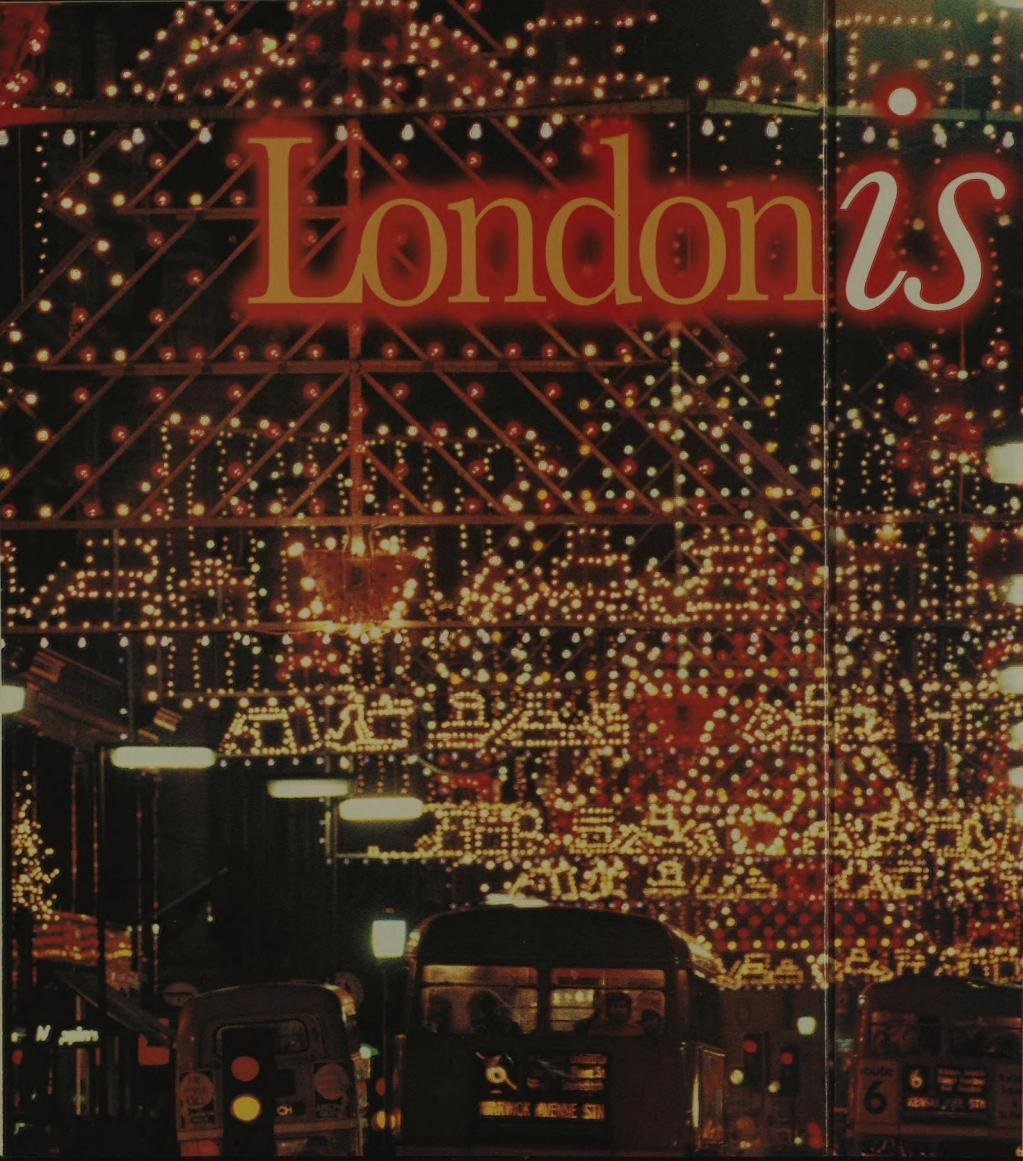


Goodwill

Above, this 1905 cover is the most popular Christmas image requested by members of the public from the *ILN* Picture Library.

Below, for a short time goodwill came amicably during World War I when a Christmas truce was declared between British and German troops in January 1915.





London is Christmas

Christmas

A total overload of eating, drinking and sentiment played out against a background of grey weather and relentless commercialism? Certainly, but Londoner Jonathan Margolis wouldn't miss a single moment of it.

Two years ago I made a big mistake. I decided to spend Christmas away from London. A long way from London—in the Caribbean. Don't misunderstand me; it would be hard to fault Tobago at Christmas. The steel band playing a welcome at the quaint little airport a couple of days before Christmas Eve, the intense green tropical vegetation, the swaying palms, the balmy temperatures, Santa Claus arriving at our beach on water skis. Ah yes. The Santa Claus thing, our first intense feeling that we were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Over Christmas lunch, eaten in our swimming costumes in a steady 30°C, we were already becoming maudlin about London at Christmas. The grey weather, the relentless commercialism, the drunken office workers, the gradual build-up to the 'feeling frenzy', we were missing every fake, tinselly moment of it.

We will not be going abroad at Christmas, or even leaving London, again at this crucial time of year. The truth is that, due to some rather complex, ancient and illogical cultural reasons, Christmas simply is London. The festival has, over several centuries, morphed its way from the commemoration of a twist in the Middle Eastern politics of 2,000 years ago, to a mid-winter mid-European feasting season, to something quintessentially English, quaint, Victorian—and cozying London from every pore. This curious state of affairs, whereby half the Christmas cards in the world seem to depict some twee, London scene of a narrow shopping alley covered in snow, lit by twinkly fairy lights and peopled by jolly, fat, mutton-chop-whiskered Londoners in the midst of a bonhomie frenzy, (or alternatively of chubby, rosy-cheeked children skating on a frozen-over London pond) is jointly the legacy of Charles Dickens and of Queen Victoria's German husband, Prince Albert.

By their separate efforts in the 19th century, the pair of them hijacked and repackaged what was not, in their day, even a very important festival in England. Albert imported Santa Claus and Christmas trees with their candles and fairies, while Dickens, in *A Christmas Carol*, invented from virtual scratch the backdrop of quaint, little

streets, roundabout local and the soppily rest of it. Most of the extra Christmas props, such as cards and crackers, were also totally redundant of London, both in origin and spirit.

Christmas cards were devised by Sir Henry Cole, a West End publisher and innovator, who was also responsible for setting up the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Royal College of Music, the Albert Hall—and public lavatories. Handmade and priced at the enormous sum of a shilling each, they were launched in 1843. Crackers were the inspiration of a Clerkenwell confectioner called Tom Smith at about the same time. Fittingly, the world's most exclusive crackers are still made and sold in London, by Asprey & Garrard, the New Bond Street jewellers. Costing as much as £1,000 for six, each, naturally, contains a silver gift.

Despite the passing of 150 years or so, and the fact that a London Christmas is largely a fictitious concept every bit as contrived as any dreamt up by Hollywood, the whole of December in London still has a distinctly Dickensian feel to it. This is true despite one of the cliché fundamentals—the image of London at Christmas as snowy—being a total myth. Meteorologists point out year after year that late December is one of the least-like-likely periods in winter for snow to fall, and Londoners can always get high odds from bookmakers against so much as a single flake falling on December 25th. Yet still, the department stores echo to the taped strains of Bing Crosby singing *White Christmas*—an all-American anthem which succeeds unfailingly in making Londoners feel nostalgic for idyllic childhood Christmases which never actually took place, but were stolen from film, literature and fairy tales.

There is so much about London to make it seem the place to be in December. There is the weather, for one, snow or not. With no more than six hours out of twenty-four enjoying daylight, December is characterized by a distinctly London smoky, damp mistiness, which for my money is more atmospheric than snow, with its accompanying bright, vivid crispness.

Added to that primordial muckiness, and its dozens of subtle shades of grey, the following real-life (as opposed to Christmas card) sights, sounds

With its thousands of twinkling fairy lights and its opulent emporia, Regent Street is a veritable shrine to Christmas consumerist fantasies.

and smells to get an essence of Christmas in London: men roasting chestnuts over braziers in the streets; forty-year-old, red, double-decker buses, their idling engines burling in the traffic like fat frying, their interiors lit by rows of old tungsten bulbs, with a friendly, golden-yellow glow, the tawdry, sparkling, multi-coloured wonder of the Regent Street illuminations; the dignified grandeur of the Trafalgar Square tree, a giant donated every year since World War II by the people of Norway; the hubbub of the West End pubs, with their oak-panelled snuggs, and groups of shopkeepers and office workers enjoying a quiet pint or a Scotch; the offices and shops, with their streamers and decorations; the mums and dads staggering out of Hamleys and Selfridges laden with bags of wonderfully-wrapped presents; the overpowering sickly-sweet pall of each department store's ground-floor perfumery department working at an ever more feverish pitch as Christmas Eve approaches; the Harvey Nichols Christmas display, a modern work of art every year; the gaudy, gorgeous Harrods storefront, with its thousands of points of festive white light picking out the pomposus shape of the vast building; the department store Father Christmases, with their paid-for ho-ho-hoing and occasional faint whiff of booze; the ice sculptures outside the Dorchester, the kind of ephemeral beauty Londoners adore all the more, knowing that the city will swallow them up before their wonder becomes a bore; watching the monied fall out of the hotels on Park Lane in the knowledge that no matter who you are or what you have achieved in life, there is always someone to gape at who is richer than you; the office party refugees, weaving home drunk and amiable, or snatching an illicit kiss with a work colleague in a backstreet.

On the rare occasions when snow does come, I have to say, London is as brilliant a place for it as there is on the planet. In the metropolis, you see, you get the best of both worlds. Not only do you have those gorgeous deep grey skies, heavily pregnant with the forthcoming blizzard, but also the strange, pre-snow silence, somehow louder than the entire noise of the city, and the mild panic of



JOSEPH SWAN



JOSEPH SWAN/CONTRIBUTOR

the populace heading for home before the sky comes down on their heads, knowing that the whole, pulsating beast will soon be transformed and tamed by a sound-deadening white blanket. But then the snow only ever lies in central London for a few hours, time enough to gorge yourself on the novelty of the spectacle, to be amused by the competition between the real snow on the pavements and the pretend, white nylon fluff in the store windows, before the heat of 15 million souls and their cars and buses vapourise the lot, and the city gets busy again without the need for an extended period of miserable, slushy mourning—beauty without the beast.

Londoners sensible enough to get through the spirit of the do not fight the Christmassing of London, but merrily indulge in the mass fantasy of assisting life in its once-yearly struggle to imitate Christmas card art. The commercialism of Christmas—such a dull, boring thing to moan about—does not detract from, but complements, the authentic atmosphere of the season as celebrated in London. Houses, shops, offices, newspaper stands, black taxis, even Tube trains, ooze a distinct Christmassiness.

Christman in London is a rip-roaring, hawdy, pagan, mid-winter, cold-weather binge of alcohol, eating, sex and sentimentality. The feasting in London at Christmas is every bit as excessive as the drinking. An incredible tonnage of food is consumed; restaurant tables are hard (yet miraculously never quite impossible) to come by, supermarkets are under siege, as we demolish dozens of precursors to the great



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CONTRIBUTOR

blow-out that is Christmas Day. Our hard-pressed stomachs thus enjoy a period of intensive training for the big event.

Growing culinary sophistication in London has, of course, changed the nature of Christmas over-indulgence in the capital. Whereas in the Victorian mythic model it was all fat geese and figgy pudding, and in the latter half of the 20th century it became American Thanksgiving-style turkey, today we routinely trawl through a dozen national cuisines in the run-up to the 25th, and even for Christmas day are as likely to be eating venison or sirloin as poultry.

Fortnum and Mason, Harrods and smaller grocery nirvanas such as Carluccio's on Neal Street try annually to out-do one another in providing a cornucopia of impossibly costly Christmas food treats. This delicacy overdrive ensures that we are as likely to find ourselves eating, say, chocolate-covered fresh figs from Italy at the end of a Brodagingian meal as we once were Christmas pudding.

Though London is a collection of interacting, interconnected, but distinct villages, Christmas is its street party, when it celebrates as a unified entity. Every part of the city slips on its best dress and most glittering jewels and hosts the same themed knees-up of shopping, buying, partying, drinking, laughing, jollifying and merriment. We all supply the atmosphere, crowding ridiculously, like characters on a Quality Street tin, into those wet, shiny streets with their ever-present little electric lights.

Oh, and then there's the entertainment, and not just the big Christmas films—which, naturally, we get in London those crucial few days before the provinces. Christmas in London includes such sublime, free delights as singing carols around the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree, as well as concerts at beautiful London churches.

London is not inclined to do things by halves. If you want to see a seasonal ballet, the Royal Ballet with someone like Darcey Bussell or Viviana Durante as Cinderella, will generally be at your service. On Boxing Day, there will always be a big, local football derby—thanks to the vast number of foreign players signed to the big teams, you can be assured of a virtual World Cup tie without leaving the capital. The West End theatres make sure they put on their *pièces de résistance* in the run-up to Christmas and, in London, you even have to adjust to the idea of pantomime not necessarily being a gruesome torture starring some hideous nonentity out of a TV soap opera. Indeed, from early November onwards, we take for granted panto of a standard so high as to beggar belief. Last year, for example, the National Theatre had *Peter Pan* with Ian McEwan as Captain Hook.

There are times when we sometimes wonder in London if we are truly the capital of the world any longer, when the competing marvels of Paris, New York and Sydney are beginning to show some of the signs of equaling, if not actually eclipsing us. But at Christmas, London is at its awesome best, doing it bigger, better, brasher and brighter than anywhere else in the world. To miss it, especially if you live here, is the height of foolishness.



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What do we believe in?

On the eve of Britain's most important religious celebration, Karen Armstrong goes from Glastonbury to Graceland to explore the impulses behind current faiths.

Faith, it would appear, is at a low ebb in Britain. Churches are emptying and are being deconsecrated to re-emerge as warehouses, restaurants and art galleries. A meagre 10 per cent of the population attend a religious service regularly and only 35 per cent claim to believe in God.

As the shops fill up with Christmas merchandise, it would be all too easy to dismiss this trend as the result of an increasingly materialistic society. But globally the picture is rather different. In America, for instance, people are growing steadily more religious; over 90 per cent believe in God and 60 per cent worship regularly. As the White House crisis over Monica Lewinsky unfolded, we watched President Bill Clinton solemnly confessing to the nation that he had sinned—behaviour that would be unthinkable in a politician here in London. And it is not just in America that religion is being increasingly invoked and involved in the government of a country.

Yet is Britain truly bucking the trend? London may confidently lay claim to being the world's secular capital, yet peer beneath the surface and you will uncover considerable religious activity in new and often surprising places. People who hold no conventional theological beliefs are practising meditation and yoga, are seeking the counsel of a spiritual advisor (now called a therapist) several times a week, are exploring the possibility of religion without a god in the Sea of Faith movement, are making pilgrimages to Glastonbury or are trying to acquire cosmic consciousness in a New Age movement. In addition, other established religious movements are flowing in from overseas. Buddhism, in particular, is attracting converts throughout the country, as, indeed, is the case in the rest of the Western world.

Fifty years ago, when secularism seemed an irreversible trend, some



pundits confidently predicted the imminent demise of faith. But this has not proved to be the case. It is sometimes assumed that religious faith is something tacked on to human nature; it is equated with superstition and ignorance or seen as a political tool, used by canny priests and rulers to cow the populace into submission. But it seems that the opposite is true and that homo sapiens is in fact homo religiosus. Ever since we fell out of the trees and became recognisably human, men and women simultaneously began to create religions and for the same reasons as they produced works of art. Art and religion are deeply related activities, as we can see when we consider the crucial role of sculpture, music, painting, architecture and poetry in religious worship.

When human beings have contemplated the beautiful yet frightening world they inhabit, their response has been complex. On the one hand, they are filled with terror as they experience the death, cruelty and random horror of life on this planet. We are the only animals who have to live with the knowledge of our own mortality and we find this very hard to bear. We are reason-seeking creatures who fall very easily into despair. Religion—like art—helps us to find some ultimate meaning and value in our existence, despite the depressing evidence to the contrary. But we also want to admire our world. Just as a great painting can make us see the beauty and form of a flower, a landscape or a chair in an entirely new way, so the practices and doctrines of religion, at their best, should hold us in an attitude of wonder.

One of the characteristics of the human mind is that it has the ability to conceive concepts that go beyond it. When we look at the world, we have always experienced a dimension that transcends it. This elusive ingredient—called variously God, the sacred, Brahman or mana—can



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: SYGMA, FRANK SPONER/PICTURES REST SYGMA

inspire an awe, dread or joy that takes us, for a moment, beyond ourselves. We experience this when we listen to a great piece of music or a poem that touches us deeply and lifts us above our normal concerns. This "ecstasy" that takes us outside ourselves is somehow necessary for our very being. It makes us feel most fully alive and in touch with the deeper currents of our existence. Religion has traditionally been one of the chief ways of accessing it, but if we no longer find ecstasy in one outlet (in church, for example), we will seek it elsewhere: in art, love, music, sex or even drugs.

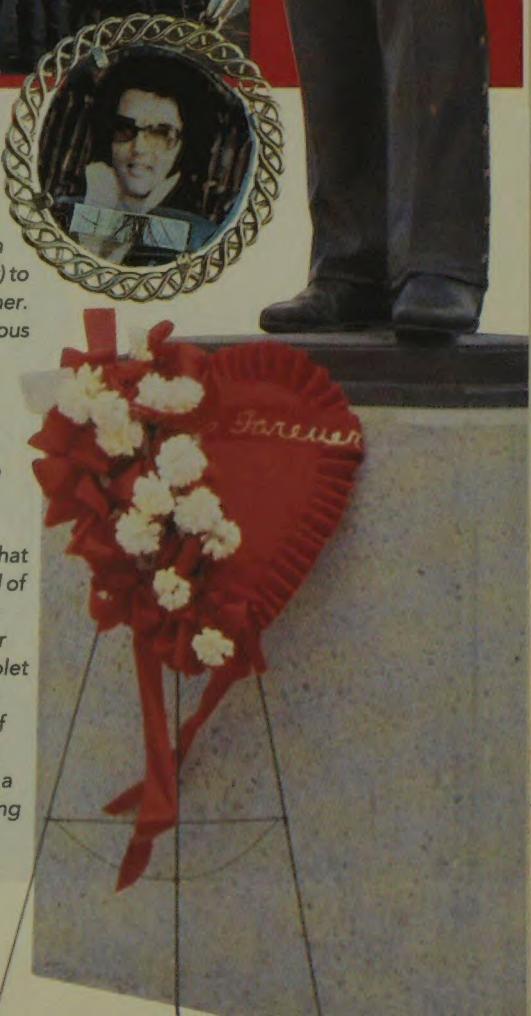
Today, many British people are also seeking this ecstasy in anything from psychotherapy to neo-paganism, since they no longer find it in conventional faiths. They do not experience the doctrines and practices of church or synagogue as pregnant with ultimate meaning. Interestingly, they will very often say that they do not "believe" in any of them: it is widely assumed that accepting certain doctrines or opinions about the sacred is the most important thing that religious people do.

We are so used to this idea that we do not realise how very peculiar it is. It is only Christianity that has this concentration on obligatory doctrines; in other traditions, such as Judaism and Islam, it is not theological belief but religious practice that is important. And even in the Christian world, it is only since the 18th-century Enlightenment that we have equated faith with belief. For St Paul, Thomas Aquinas or Luther faith meant trust, rather as we say we have faith in a person or an ideal. The Latin *credo* (translated "I believe") probably came from the words *cor dare*: to give your heart. Even the old English word *believe* originally meant to love.

But at the time of the Enlightenment, our Western emphasis on

People continue to respond religiously to events that touch them profoundly. This was clear after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, when mourners lit candles (above left) to express their grief and faith in her. Overnight she became a religious icon and on the Internet, her face is superimposed on Italian Renaissance paintings (above, far left), as in this Madonna and Child by Alessio Baldinovetti, 1465.

The history of religion shows that anything can become a symbol of the divine: even Elvis Presley. Clockwise from top, a believer receives a sacred 1957 Chevrolet at the First Church of Elvis the Divine in Colorado; a statue of the King in Memphis; a locket said to contain Elvis' hair; and a queue of followers approaching Graceland on the anniversary of their idol's death.



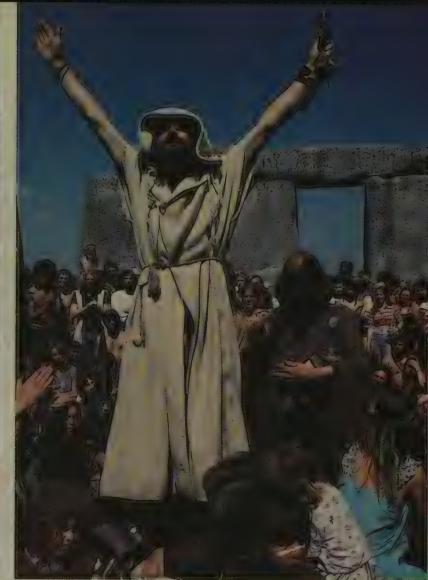
By making pilgrimages, people spontaneously reproduce one of the earliest and most universal expression of the religious impulse. Certain places have always been seen as possessing spiritual power. The journey itself, the act of walking away from normal lives, can become a transforming experience as, right and far right, hippies at Stonehenge, celebrating the summer solstice, found.

Buddhists believe by living in a certain way, meditating, avoiding certain substances and practising compassion to all living beings, they will find intimations of nirvana. The belief has spread throughout the world; below, meditating at the Samye Ling Centre in Scotland and, below right, bell ringing at the Plum Village Buddhist community in Meyras, France.

reason and science changed the way we saw our religious doctrines. We began to assume that they expressed objective realities that could be proved, like the other phenomena we were investigating in our laboratories. We started to read our scriptures for literal information, in much the same way as we read other texts. Hitherto the study of history had been more concerned to discover the meaning of an event. With the birth of scientific history in the 18th century, we began to be chiefly concerned to find out what actually happened.

Thus when the evangelists we know as Matthew and Luke described the birth of Jesus, they were writing theology rather than history in our sense of the word. The Christmas story was not designed to give us cast-iron facts about the Nativity, but to tell us what it meant. Matthew wanted to show, from the very beginning of his gospel, that the Messiah had come not only for the Jews but also for the gentiles (hence the arrival of the wise men from the East). Luke has shepherds come to the crib, to show that Jesus had come for the poor, marginalised people of society. But today Christians are sometimes shocked when New Testament scholars point out such things, because they assume that if something didn't happen, it can't be true.

Because of the modern, literal interpretation of such doctrines as a personal God or of creation, an increasing number of people in Britain today can no longer "believe" in religion. But hitherto, Jewish, Christian and Muslim thinkers had stressed repeatedly that none of our ideas about the divine can be accurate or complete because the sacred must



We have to live with the knowledge of our own mortality and we find this hard to bear. Religion helps us find some meaning



transcend all human categories. The Koran emphasises that every one of its statements about God, the afterlife or the Last Judgement is *ayn* (a parable), because we can only talk about God in signs and symbols.

So when churchmen, who have lost sight of this, tell the faithful that certain doctrines are obligatory, more and more people are forced to admit that they cannot be "believers". They still, however, seek ecstasy and are finding new ways to live a spiritual life. A great attraction of Buddhism is that it has no doctrines and has always prized spiritual practice over theology. When people learn techniques of meditative concentration, make a pilgrimage to a religious centre such as Glastonbury, try to find new ways of listening to nature or work practically for the environment, the homeless or the sick, they are discovering for themselves a universal religious truth. They find that regardless of their "beliefs" about God or the supernatural, these disciplines yield moments of insight that give them new "faith" in human life.

We often assume that before we can undertake the duties of a religious

life, we must first convince ourselves that God or the sacred exists. This is sound scientific practice: first you establish a principle, then you apply it. But the masters of the spiritual life all teach us that this is not the way it works. When the Buddha was asked if nirvana existed, he said that it was an improper question, because there were no words or concepts that could give us any useful idea of what nirvana is. But, he continued, if his questioners lived in a certain way: meditating, avoiding substances that cloud the mind, always trying to speak accurately, and practising compassion to all living beings, they would find that they had intimations of nirvana, even though they would not be able to define it in a neat formula.

Last summer, on the anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley, I took part in a television documentary about the various Elvis cults that have emerged both in America and in Britain. People in an Elvis church meet together, an Elvis lookalike sings his songs, and they pass round and touch Elvis memorabilia. Others make a solemn visit to Graceland or surround themselves with icons of the King. Many believe that they have had visions of Elvis and that he will return to earth one day. As I watched the footage with Ted Harrison, the director of the documentary, I was fascinated to see that the Elvis worshippers had spontaneously reproduced ancient rituals.

Thus from a very early stage of human history, people developed ceremonies which purported to imitate the actions of the gods. This practice of *imitatio dei* is deep-rooted in religion. Even today people rest on Saturday or Sunday, or eat bread and drink wine in church (actions which are meaningless in themselves) because they believe that, in some sense, God, himself, performed them. By these imitative rituals, people felt that they shared the divine power inherent in the original events. Such liturgy was a form of theatre, which, even in an entirely secular context, can yield a transcendent experience.

Now, when fans imitate Elvis and listen in a ritualised way to his emotional music, they feel that he becomes present in some way and that they are caught up in something that is greater than themselves. They

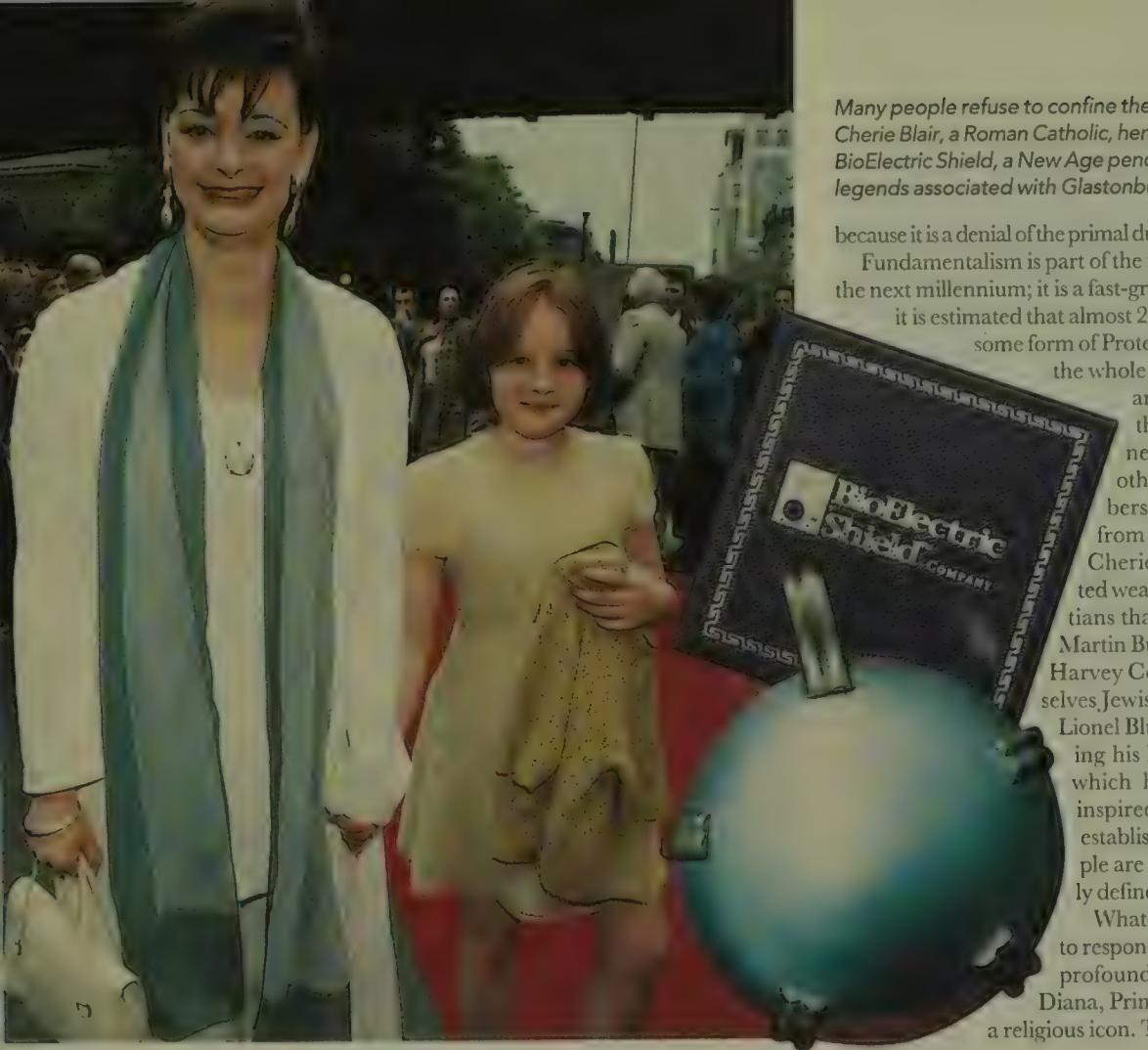
find this experience liberating and life-enhancing. The interesting fact is that some of these Elvis churches started as a joke, but the power of the rite nevertheless created a "faith" within the worshippers.

Similarly, by making the pilgrimage to Graceland—as to Canterbury or Lourdes—people are spontaneously reproducing one of the very earliest and most universal expressions of the religious impulse. Certain places have always been seen as possessing spiritual power and pilgrims have been given access to this by the ritualised dramas and processions that take place in those places. Visiting the tomb of a sacred personage, now believed to be in heaven, creates a personal link with the next world. But also the journey itself, which mirrors an internal quest for a new direction, the act of walking away from our normal lives, and communion with other like-minded pilgrims, can turn out to be a transforming experience.

But not always. The spiritual masters have always insisted that true ecstasy involves a transcendence of self: it is the greedy, frightened, vacuous ego that impedes our spiritual progress. That is why both the Buddha and the Bible teach us that the practice of compassion is the most important virtue: it forces us to put other people in the centre of our lives instead of ourselves. Thus the New Age can indeed yield a transcendent experience. It teaches its followers to cultivate a sense of our connection with all other things and to put an end to anthropocentric thinking instead of concentrating on human requirements, we must consider the needs of the forests, oceans and atmosphere. New Age has thus evolved meditative disciplines that help people to get beyond the ego in the ultimate ecstasy. Helping to save a forest can, therefore, give us new insight into the sacred. But clinging to a tree while yelling abuse at a municipal worker who has been instructed to cut it down will not.

My criticism of the Elvis churches was that they did not inspire their devotees to selfless action. The Buddha said that after achieving enlightenment, a man must return to the marketplace and practise compassion. It is not enough to wallow in the experience of being "saved" from anomie, despair and a lack of meaning. Some of these





Many people refuse to confine their beliefs to a rigidly defined system: Cherie Blair, a Roman Catholic, here with daughter Kathryn, is wearing the BioElectric Shield, a New Age pendant. Below, the medieval myths and legends associated with Glastonbury still attract modern-day pilgrims.

because it is a denial of the primal duty of compassion, it is a travesty of faith.

Fundamentalism is part of the modern scene and will go with us into the next millennium; it is a fast-growing form of religiosity. In America, it is estimated that almost 25 per cent of the population adhere to some form of Protestant Fundamentalism. But this is not the whole picture. While some religious people

are building up new barricades against the "other", some are seeking to create new contact. Increased knowledge of other faiths means that increasing numbers of people are drawing nourishment from more than one tradition. Recently Cherie Blair, a Roman Catholic, was spotted wearing a New Age pendant; more Christians than Jews read the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, while Jews read Paul Tillich and Harvey Cox. There are people who call themselves Jewish and Christian "Buddhists"; Rabbi Lionel Blue published a book this year describing his long love-affair with Christianity in which he describes a vision of Jesus that inspired him to become a Rabbi. Religious establishments may not like it, but many people are refusing to be confined within a rigidly defined belief system.

Whatever their beliefs, people will continue to respond religiously to events that touch them profoundly. This was clear after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, who overnight became a religious icon. The history of religion shows that anything can become a symbol of the divine: mountains, rocks, temples, law-codes,

men, women—and even Elvis Presley. All such symbols are bound to be inadequate, since no earthly reality can fully express the sacred. A Hindu tradition says that the more inadequate a symbol, the more powerful and effective it is, since it reminds us of the distance between our human world and the perfection for which we yearn. A crucified Messiah was initially a scandal and a stumbling block, as St Paul told the Corinthians. Yet Jesus on the cross was to become a compelling image of the divine. So, momentarily, did the princess.

Diana may have been a flawed



Religion has traditionally lifted us above worldly matters

new religious movements indulge in navel-gazing at the expense of such charity. So, too, the traditional faiths often seem so concerned with surviving in a secularist society that seems hostile to religion that they devote all their energies to preserving a "true" Jewish, Christian, or Muslim identity and show no compassion to those outside. Many people were shocked last year when Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, an Orthodox Jew, refused to attend the funeral of Rabbi Hugo Gryn, who was an adherent of Reform Judaism.

In the same way, during the acrimonious debate about admitting women to the priesthood of the Church of England in November 1993, the Rt Rev David Jenkins, then Bishop of Durham, asked, almost in tears: "Is it not shameful to be quarrelling as we are about women in the Church when the whole world is torn by poverty, strife and loss?" It is easy to be so concerned with defending a sacred identity—a self—that we forget that the greatest virtue is charity. A beleaguered soul very often wants to destroy others for the sake of its own self-preservation. That is also one of the hallmarks of the religious fundamentalism that has erupted in almost all of the world faiths in the dying days of the 20th century.

Fundamentalism is an embattled form of faith, determined to push religion from the sidelines of the secularist society to centre stage. Hence its militants often berate their own co-religionists who do not share their vision. Extremists—who form only a tiny minority—can resort to terror: to the bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma, the murder of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin, and the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. This kind of violence rightly gives religion a bad name;

young woman, but people felt that they had glimpsed something of infinite value in her work for the sick and the powerless, and also in her struggle to give meaning to the sadness and confusion of her own life. Immediately they heard of her death, people started to make the "pilgrimage" to London to feel close to her; places associated with the princess became "shrines". It is not only in Britain that Diana was felt to embody divine values: in America during the last year, at least two churches have been dedicated to the princess.

Perhaps people instinctively saw in Diana something that often seems lacking in the religious establishments. Such a "faith" has little to do with beliefs, creeds or theological systems. People will continue to use religion to make sense of their lives, in conventional churches or in the more unorthodox religious movements. Some of the latter are bizarre and self-indulgent, but they show that at some deep level people know that "faith" is not a matter of swallowing received "beliefs" wholesale, but a vision of trust and hope that has to be created within the worshipper by rituals, practices and the discipline of compassion.

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GLASS OF 98

Glassmakers have been producing studio glass for 30 years, but this year saw a concentration on their craft like no other. From sculptural pieces to stained-glass windows, from architectural features to furniture, Victoria O'Brien evaluates the output of London's best glass designers.

Glass-making is currently enjoying a revival, with glassmakers themselves finally being acknowledged less as craftsmen than artists. If you are searching for the ultimate Christmas gift, one-off pieces by London's burgeoning population of glass designers should be high on your list. Some of the pieces are costly collector's items, many are more standard decorative objects, but all are handmade and therefore have an innate quality and individuality.

The techniques of glass-making involve some of the most ancient manufacturing processes—the Egyptians were great exponents of exquisitely coloured decorative pieces, as were the Romans. Architectural glass, notably stained-glass windows, has enjoyed a long history in this country especially in ecclesiastical settings, but has also been widely used since Victorian times as a decorative addition to the home.

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD



"Stained glass is an interruption of light. Many antique stained-glass windows were originally conceived to depict biblical stories. They are beautiful objects, in whatever setting they are placed today."

Neil Phillips' abiding passion for stained glass, means that he not only buys and sells antique stained-glass windows, but also provides a restoration service and the facility for individual clients to have new stained-glass windows manufactured to

their own designs and requirements.

The complex process and traditional skills involved in producing stained glass ensure that each piece is unique in form and colour. Phillips' London showroom has been passed on from father to son, and uses the services of some of the oldest stained-glass manufacturers in Britain, places where the Victorian designer Pugin had many of his own, original designs for stained glass made up.

Several art schools and colleges still maintain courses in stained glass, but the chance to own original works by past masters is rare. Sourcing windows from auction rooms and private sales, Neil Phillips provides his clients with the opportunity to share in his technically-coloured vision of the past.



NATURAL INSPIRATION



"Glass has unique and opposing characteristics: transparency, fragility, strength and flexibility, which I try to highlight in my works. I find inspiration in the soft, tactile forms of nature and aim to reproduce them in polished glass."

Shortlisted for this year's Jerwood Prize, **Gail Amsel**'s work was first featured in the Crafts Council's Glass Show in 1993, and was subsequently bought for the Victoria & Albert Museum collection the following year. Her clear glass objects are almost always accented with a touch of textural colour, copper leaf applications or similar contemporary

techniques.

Amsel's recent organic and natural forms show a remarkable attention to detail and a sensitivity to her material which many contemporary glassmakers ignore. The finely-textured surfaces of her "Seeds" series presuppose the ability to touch and feel these very delicate objects.

Produced using a lost wax and cast glass technique, these organic pieces follow on from more formally constructed glass sculptures. Using square forms of slumped glass (this is glass which has been heated in a kiln to a point where it softens and will slump over a mould placed beneath it) Amsel has created artful geometric objects, as well as glass clocks and candlesticks.

Collectors of this artist's sculptural work display her pieces in showcases set into the walls of their homes, on special shelving or plinths, but more often the works are simply laid out on a table. The idea of this hard-edged glass art is that one should be able to touch and feel it.

Gail Amsel's recent work draws on organic and natural forms for its inspiration. Below, "Seeds 1, 2 & 3" are patinated with metal leaf to produce a finely textured surface. Right, both "Choker II", top, and "Ebb", below, are clear glass, lost wax cast, sandblasted and polished, with a patinated copper surface.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SPENCE



STACKS OF TALENT

"The objects I make often have a practical as well as visual purpose. Designing glass furniture is full of contrasts. The material is transparent, without shadows, yet it can be designed to provide great mass and strength."

Danny Lane's favourite piece is "Angarab", top. The glass wall "Broken Sea", right, was commissioned by Cleveland Arts. "Love Vase", above, is made from mouth-blown and stained glass.

Danny Lane is one of Britain's most influential and inventive glassmakers. By cutting, shaping, stacking and sandblasting glass, he literally paints with light. His spiky, layered and jagged-edged pieces put paid to any conventional notion of how glass should look.

The sharp edges are visual illusions, however. To touch, these pieces of furniture and sculpture feel smoothly crafted, the culmination of an almost scientific approach to the art of glass-making. Having originally trained in traditional stained glass, Lane now uses adaptations of float glass techniques originally devised by Pilkington in the 1950s.

Lane's most celebrated work is the extraordinary stacked glass balustrade for the Victoria & Albert Museum. On a smaller scale, tables are made from thick sheets of glass piled high with their irregular greenish edges glowing with light, and chairs take on a similar form. Lane's favourite piece of furniture is "Angarab", his glass bed—a huge chaise longue made up from hundreds of delicate shards of glass draped over a base of tree branches. Sleeping, rather than walking on broken glass.



LEIF LARSEN

A FLUID MOVEMENT



Left, the "Metropolis" vase, a one-off piece by Bob Crooks. Right, Anna Dickinson's clear glass vase with electroformed copper rim.

"My glassware is an experiment in three-dimensional design, but it is also a reaction against all the bland, factory-made glass products. Glass is a fluid material, with unique refractive and reflective properties which ought to be exploited, so that they can continually change the look of each piece produced."

As an artist working in glass, **Bob Crooks** is one of the few who have been able to master the traditional technique of glass-blowing. As a student, he was lucky enough to have attended an art foundation course where the use of a glass furnace was offered as part of the curriculum. In his studio today, he now employs a variety of techniques, including moulding, "freezing", and cold-glass processes.

Spun glass, the technique used in his Tornado range of cups and vases, involves rotating the piece at high speed, allowing a trail of molten liquid to be wound round and applied tightly to form the vessel's shape. This hot-glass application is essentially the reinvention of a technique which goes back to Roman times.

Crooks' studio, First Glass, are involved in making glassware production items such as the Tornado range, as well as one-off pieces for private clients. These can be as diverse as a matching pair of wine glasses, or a large, sculptural chandelier. The style of Crooks' pieces ranges from the conservative to the bizarre, heavily influenced by his use of 13 favourite colours of glass—from subtle tones of grey and lavender, to more obvious shades of red and orange.



GOLD DEPOSITS

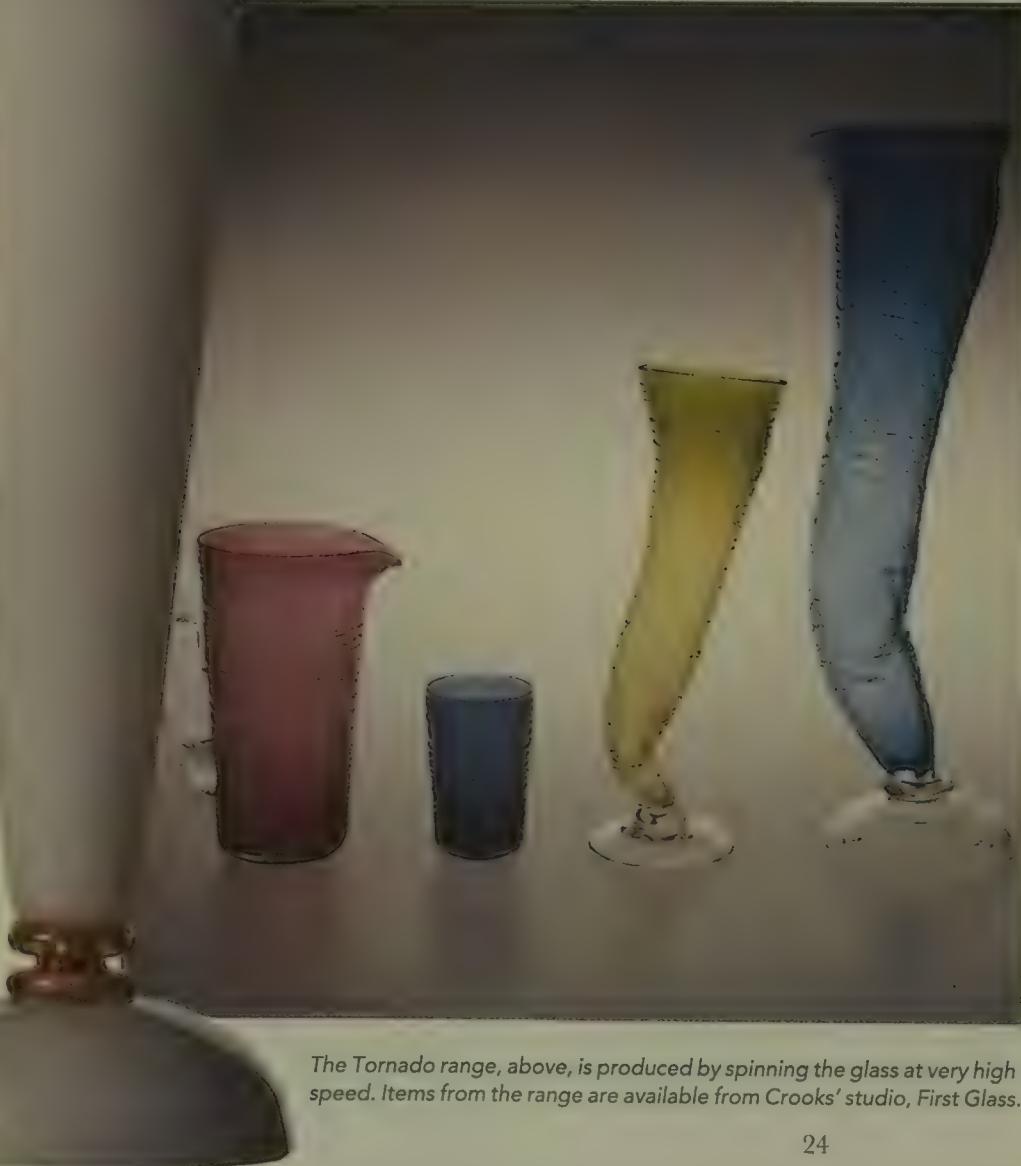


"I may employ several different techniques in the production of a single piece of glass, and, similarly, may combine several different styles. My inspiration can come from many sources. The incised, lined markings on African sculptures or the modern industrial aesthetic of rusting gas tanks near Battersea Power Station—both are equally valid."

Artist **Anna Dickinson** has worked full time in glass since 1981, and has developed a speciality in electroformed glass, a technique she has virtually pioneered in this country. This complex method involves electrically depositing metal (copper, silver or gold) on glass, with chemically coloured patinas.

Dickinson is also well known for her black glass. Her diverse inspirations are apparent in her colour and textural combinations. Cutting techniques in her black glass objects are reminiscent of African art, whilst a palette of dark brown, silver and deep blue are the result of an encounter with a woman in India—dark brown skin, silver arm bangles and blue painted body tattoo.

Serious international collectors, rock stars and media moguls have all bought Dickinson's highly prized works. The processes involved in creating these pieces are so lengthy and time-consuming, she has no plans to launch a more widely available range of glassware.



The Tornado range, above, is produced by spinning the glass at very high speed. Items from the range are available from Crooks' studio, First Glass.

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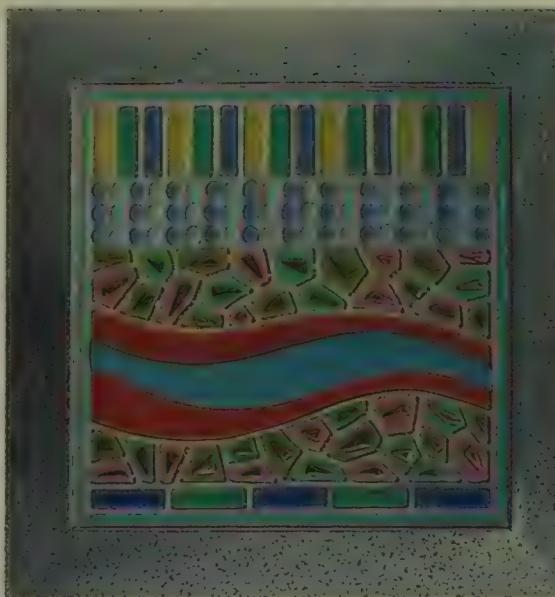
"Interior designers buy my tiles to incorporate them in wall finishes, or inlay them in furniture, but individual pieces can just as easily be used in isolation as an art object. One client has a single, sparkling tile on a mantelpiece, displayed as a colourful gem."

Since graduating from Chelsea College of Art and Design in 1992, **Amy Cushing** has pioneered highly innovative techniques which combine ceramic and fused glass. Trading under the name Mosquito, Cushing now produces a range of objects, including beautifully crafted bowls and platters, derived from the simple forms of her geometrically patterned tiles.

The handmade ceramic and glass tiles are used as decorative highlights within the setting of ordinary wall and floor tiles, providing colourful additions for kitchen or bathroom splashbacks, or added interest for floor borders. Limited production glassware has the same Op Art look—squares within squares, fused to form graphic patterns. Cushing also produces one-off framed compositions which incorporate her highly individual combinations of materials.

Cushing's iridescent designs, in brilliantly vibrant hues, feature rare materials developed for space programme technology. Her colourful creations are modern-age versions of traditional stained glass—ones that sparkle, shimmer and glow.

Below, "Dichroic Sparkle", hand-fused glass tiles featuring fused metallic centres. Right, "Fish", a one-off glass composition framed in galvanised steel, intended as a wall piece.



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Danny Lane, 19 Hythe Road, NW10 (0181-968 3399). Tables, chandeliers, chairs and sculptures available, or to commission. Prices on application.

Bob Crooks, First Glass, Unit 2A Union Court, Union Road, Clapham, SW4 (0171-622 3322) or **Contemporary Applied Arts**, as above. Tornado glasses, £21.95 each; vases, £80. Commissioned pieces, prices on application.

Anna Dickinson (0181-699 1527). Prices for black cut and electroformed glass vases from £3,500 to £7,500.

Amy Cushing, Mosquito, 62 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames (0181-715 5611). Glassware platter and bowls, from £110. Glass tiles, around £50 each, from World's End Tiles (0171-819 2100).

Contemporary Glass Gallery, The Victoria & Albert Museum, South Kensington (0171-938 8500).

Crafts Council Gallery, Pentonville Road, N1 (0171-278 7700). Details of exhibitions and list of glassmakers.

The National Glass Centre, Sunderland (0191-515 5555). Exhibition of The Jerwood Prize for Applied Arts 1998: Glass. Oct 21-Nov 22.



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Have yourself a very merry designer Christmas. Jo Foley assembles a dream team to celebrate with panache

Seasonal

To some people Christmas isn't Christmas unless it is white. But for me, Christmas is about colour and opulence. It is summed up in the glow of fairy lights and the gleam from glass baubles on the tree, candles flickering through stained-glass windows and the splashes of crimson from holly berries, Santa's coat and, of course, Rudolf's nose.

Christmas must be overflowing: with the warmth of friendship and log fires; with colourful decorations and sumptuous food; and with generous presents to delight both giver and receiver. So for the duration of the festivities, discard thoughts of minimalism, and pared-down decor. Instead, luxuriate in and celebrate the richness of the season.

Christmas should, above all, be sheer fantasy and in this spirit, I've chosen my dream team to create the ultimate de luxe celebrations.



FOOD TO DIE FOR

Central to most celebrations is food and drink, and I want mine designed, supplied and cooked by **Lorna Wing**—whose gem-like canapés make her a veritable Fabergé of caterers. For 20 years she has been delighting eyes and taste-buds with minute Maryland crab cakes, tiny portions of fish and chips served in cornets of the *Financial Times*, bite-sized tartlets of bacon and eggs—all presented like baubles from a jewellery casket. But as she cannot organise all our parties she is invariably block-booked by such clients as Tom Cruise, Giorgio Armani and Eric Clapton—Wing has just published *Party Food*, a stylish book packed with some of her favourite recipes for a range of festivities from cocktail parties through to wedding buffets, alongside down-to-earth advice on planning

Style

and budgeting. As Terence Conran, whose Heal's restaurant she ran for many years in tandem with her own catering business, notes in the book's foreword: "She combines meticulous planning with tasty food and a creative eye. She knows that nothing is worse than bland, unimaginative food that ends up being hidden in the pots and killing the plants."

For my Christmas Eve cocktail party, Wing will produce taste-packed treats with an Asian touch. We will have skewered bay scallops with pickled ginger and coriander and a Thai dipping sauce, alongside ginger-lemongrass pork patties with sweet chilli sauce.

Since this is a special occasion, there will also be lashings of sevruga caviar, with crème fraîche and chives, on mother-of-pearl spoons. Anyone with a sweet tooth will love

the tiny pop-in-the-mouth cranberry jellies with gold leaf (a super-sophisticated fruit gum!) and tiny Christmas puddings on cinnamon shortbreads.

All of these will be liberally washed down with sparkling Shiraz and pink Champagne. For those driving home there will be liberal supplies of non-alcoholic ginger cordial with star-anise ice cubes.

Christmas dinner itself will be a complete break from tradition—beginning with a prawn, green mango and coconut salad, with a lime and palm-sugar dressing, followed by crispy glazed and spiced duck with plum sauce, wild red rice and stir-fried button sprouts, red onions and shiitake mushrooms. A delicious feast of wonderful flavours, scents and colours.



Mouthwatering morsels from Lorna Wing (left) include clockwise from left: tiny Christmas puddings on cinnamon shortbread; gilded sachertorte decorated with cape gooseberries; ginger-flavoured cocktail made special with star-anise ice-cubes; hot buttered rum cups flavoured individually by stirring with cinnamon sticks; and bite-sized chocolate cups with mini-scoops of ice cream.

FRENCH ELAN

The Christmas delicacies will seem even more spectacular if served on a table especially decorated by French couturier **Christian Lacroix**—who has recently diversified into the *arts de la table*.

Known for his love of the bright colours of his native Provence, Lacroix will bring all his French joie de vivre and marry it to the great English traditions of the season. "For me, Christmas is Anglo-Saxon, not French," he says.

Lacroix's Christmas banquet will therefore be served on fine English tableware mixed with his own more flamboyant designs: china and glassware are his latest ventures. He will choose English silver for serving platters and cutlery—all ranged around baroque candelabras with candles in shades of claret, amethyst and gold.

The table's centrepiece will be an arrangement of huge white roses and holly, but the tablecloths will be straight from Arles, where it is traditional to use three slightly sheer ones, one on top of another, so that the different shades filter through: mauve, then pink and finally a very fine lace on top. More colour will emanate from the glasses—in a mixture of cranberry and amethyst crystal.

Once the candles are lit and the food presented, the entire table will resemble the glowing colours of a medieval casket.

Clockwise from above right: Lacroix's Christmas table glows with yellow Follement crockery and cutlery, and crystal Absolut and Follement goblets, on an Esmeralda tablecloth; blush pink Follement plates support a sky blue dessert plate and aniseed green coffee cup and saucer; placements are in mauve, the Lacroix colour for 1998.

ALL THAT GLISTERS



Angela Hale's counters shimmer with exquisite crystal earrings and necklaces alongside beautiful beaded and velvet antique bags. What more brilliant way to add sparkle to a Christmas tree than by draping it with some of her beautifully colourful jewellery?



For my tree decorations I shall pay a visit to the tiny jewellery gallery of **Angela Hale**. Jet-setting luminaries such as Kate Moss, Julie Christie and Stella McCartney browse the counters which sparkle with delicate necklaces and chokers dripping with crystal beads in every conceivable shade, from clear to ruby and from the palest pink to the chicer grey. There are myriad earrings with flower drops—every last one resembling an heirloom, but each as modern as tomorrow. "Although they are all based on old designs it is the colours that make them so contemporary," Hale explains. In addition to crystal, she stocks tiny art-deco style photo frames and a beautiful collection of vintage evening bags, especially a tiny satin and beaded one which she has made in Prague.

Who better, then, to design my Christmas tree? Foregoing the traditional star, Hale would place a crystal coronet on the top, the sort you see in fairytale books or on the Sugar Plum Fairy. The rest of the tree would be festooned with crystal necklaces—brighter yet more subtle than tinsel—earrings would dangle from branch ends and minute art-deco frames with their vivid enamelling would reflect the light in place of baubles. Around the base would be stacked the most sumptuous of beaded and velvet antique bags.



TREASURE CHEST

So to the presents. Every year I live in hope of finding one shop where I can do all my gift buying, and find something perfect for each of my friends and family. This Christmas, with that in mind, I will head for one of **Anoushka Ducas' Links** of London boutiques, which are full of clever gift ideas in stylish silver. People are always happy to receive a present in a precious metal, whether it's a fountain pen, a pair of millennium cufflinks, a bottle stopper or the chicest pair of chopsticks. There is even a wonderful silver worry bean for those who always dread facing the bills in the New Year. All the products are beautifully designed (Ducas was named silver designer of the year) and exquisitely packaged. She founded the company with her husband John Ayston in 1990, and they have expanded to over 300 outlets in 26 countries. Currently there are six stores in London and one each at Heathrow's Terminal One and Four, ideal if you are going abroad before Christmas, as you can do your shopping duty free.

The perfect one-stop shop for all your Christmas gifts, Anoushka Ducas' Links boutiques are treasure houses of elegant silver items from pens to jewellery.



FLOWERS AND FINISHING TOUCHES



To decorate my home ready for all the festivities, who else would one call upon but **Kenneth Turner**, one of the world's foremost floral designers. His Mount Street emporium is well known for dazzling the senses with its bouquets of exotic blooms, and baskets overflowing with fragrant candles, toiletries and other sumptuous items.

Once Turner had transformed my dining room into a festive fantasy, I would ask him to assist me in wrapping my presents—something that he feels is an important part of the entire Christmas decor. "I hate to see presents shoddily wrapped—especially the



unusually-shaped ones which should always go into boxes first," he says. He loves to balance the outlandish and innovative with the simple—so this year his presents will be swathed in vast banana leaves tied with bear-grass bows.

Turner has introduced special Christmas decoration classes at his London flower school, which opened at South Molton Street last April. This Christmas, students will learn to make spectacular door wreaths, mantle decorations, garlands and much, much more.

And what could make a better Christmas gift than a voucher to attend a flower arranging day at Turner's school in the New Year?

Festive decoration and beautiful present wrapping are fine arts in the hands of Kenneth Turner. Why not treat someone to a gift of a course at his flower school?

• *Louisa Wing's Party Food* is published by Conran Octopus at £20. See page 73 for a selection of recipes and a special reader offer.

• *Christian Lacroix's Tableware and Hosting* is available at the website.

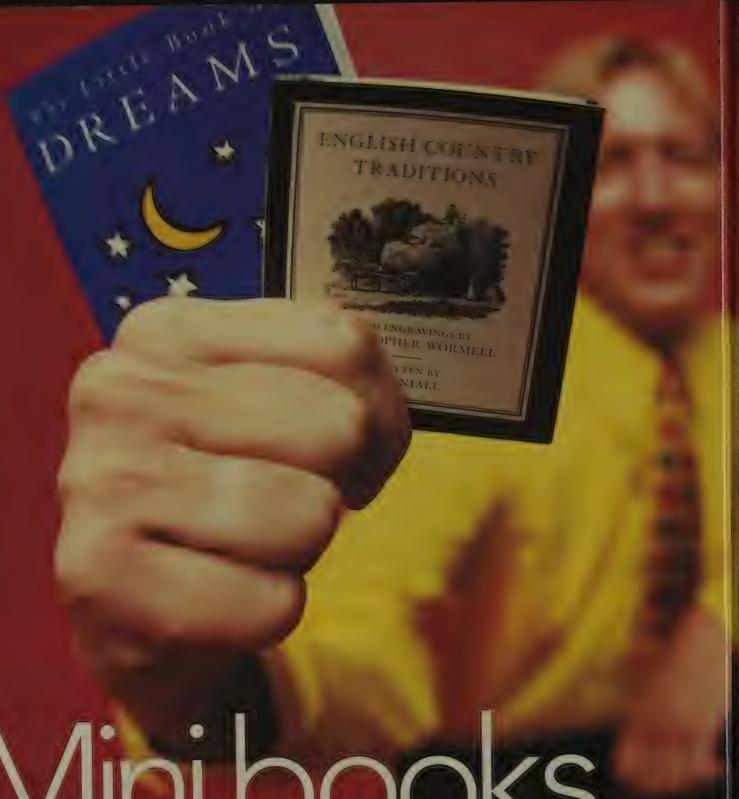
• *Angela Hale's Galerie* is at 5 The Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street, London W1 (0171 495 1720). Her first new order catalogue will be published in time for Christmas.

• The Kenneth Turner Flower School, tel 0171 699 2560. Courses from £195 for a day.

• For Links outlets, tel 01483 450155.

Mini books pack a punch

Why have these tiny champions taken the country by storm and become a fashion accessory? Little books, explains Roger Tredre, are big business.



When mini books began their recent onslaught on the cash-register counter, many people in the publishing trade dismissed them as a passing gimmick. The formula seemed too obvious—cherry-pick a few words about flowers by famous writers and turn them into a neat stocking-filler for mums at Christmas time. How lovely! A sort of Laura Ashley of the printed word.

Think again. Running Press, the Philadelphia-based market leader in "miniature editions", has sold an astonishing £24 million of these dainty volumes. Little books, big bucks. The sort of sales that put smiles on the faces of publishers worldwide, particularly when most other areas of the book trade are experiencing hard times. Running Press has even gone so far as to trademark its specific format, so no one else can produce a hardback measuring two-and-a-half by three inches.

Bookshops in London are selling mini books by the thousand. The biggest seller is *The Little Book of Calm*, by Paul Wilson, published by Penguin, which has been sitting easily in the top position of bookshops for over a year now and still holds its own on the best-seller lists 18 months and three million copies after its publication. A follow-up, *The Little Book of Calm At Work*, is planned. And the book has even prompted a parody by Craig Brown, *The Little Book of Chase*. Penguin—and Paul Wilson—should have another good Christmas. One day I visited a bookshop in central London, thirty-something Beth Gunnell was buying a copy. Why? "I like the size," she said. "It's sort of sweet. You can keep it in your handbag and just take it out for a few minutes to while away a bus ride."

Penguin started the vogue here

Travelman series of £1 short stories which are rather like fold-up maps. They include stories from writers such as D.H. Lawrence, HG. Wells, and Arthur Conan Doyle. Publisher Alexander Waugh, grandson of Evelyn Waugh, plans to sell them from "story-and railway stations. His model, he says, is the success of twopenny short stories by Rudyard Kipling that were once sold on Indian railways. Waugh describes his idea, with a heavy dose of hyperbole, as "the most revolutionary concept in book publishing since the invention of the paperback".

The concept is not as new as he might think. The idea of miniature books has a long history: the Elizabethans loved their little, treasured volumes of poetry—and poetry remains one of the most successful subjects.

Writers including
Will Self and Louis de
Bernières introduce the new
pocket-sized books of the Bible.

three years ago by issuing 60 small editions at 60p to mark the company's 60th anniversary. Titles ranged from *Seven Yorkshire Tales* by James Herriot to *The Pilgrim's Progress* by Edgar Allan Poe to the stoic reflections of Marcus Aurelius. They closed up the best-seller lists for months on end until rival publishers started complaining—and mini books were discounted from the best-seller lists for standard-sized editions. But then everyone jumped on the bandwagon. Weidenfeld & Nicholson produced a series called *Classic Chefs*. Orion launched a plethora of mini classics, including Milton's *Paradise Lost*—perhaps the ultimate sell-out mini book. And other publishers produced slim-line versions of bigger books from the miniature series of *Old Simple home interior books to the Travelman Guide* for budget travellers. Some publishers also designed super-mini volumes for Valentine's Day: a heart on the cover and a few love thoughts inside a book not much bigger than a thumbprint.

Another recent launch is the Travelman series of £1 short stories which are rather like fold-up maps. They include stories from writers such as D.H. Lawrence, HG. Wells, and Arthur Conan Doyle. Publisher Alexander Waugh, grandson of Evelyn Waugh, plans to sell them from "story-and railway stations. His model, he says, is the success of twopenny short stories by Rudyard Kipling that were once sold on Indian railways. Waugh describes his idea, with a heavy dose of hyperbole, as "the most revolutionary concept in book publishing since the invention of the paperback".

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Chic
companions:
exquisite little
books on Italian paper
from Pushkin Press
and Hermès' new Tree handbag.

for the little book publisher. The children's book market also has a long tradition of little books: think of the Beatrix Potter books in their small format, still treasured by the many adults brought up on them.

In the US, Running Press has been selling mini books since 1989 when brothers Lawrence and Stuart Teacher introduced the first title at the suggestion of a bookseller. Now Running Press miniatures are swamping our shores, including some specially created for Britain: *Cricket—Wit, Wicks and Wisdom*, and *English Country Traditions*, illustrated with a series of taste-ful wood engravings.

I put in a call to Running Press at their head office in Philadelphia. "We love them because they can go into places other books don't normally go," said publicity director Justin Loerher. "Clothing shops, gift-card shops, just about any shop you care to mention. They're like a dinner party instead of a bottle of wine." That sounds a bit odd. "Hey, why not?" said Loerher. "Bette to get words than to get drunk."

The two best-selling miniatures in the Running Press catalogue are deeply schmaltzy: *My Sister*, a children's pop-up book described as "treasury of composition", and *Quotable Women*, subtitled *A Collection of Shared Thoughts*. Neither of these

books can be described as great literature, but then Running Press unashamedly operates at the popular end of the market.

A British publisher is also tapping into the demand for fun-sized books. Apple Press introduced a series of miniature cook books in 1996 doubling up as fridge magnets—"two for the price of one" as the publisher's catalogue enthusiastically puts it.

Since then, Apple has sold two-and-a-half million copies and expanded the range considerably. Just right for the Christmas stocking is *The Magnetic Dog Companion*, sure to be a classic piece of literature.

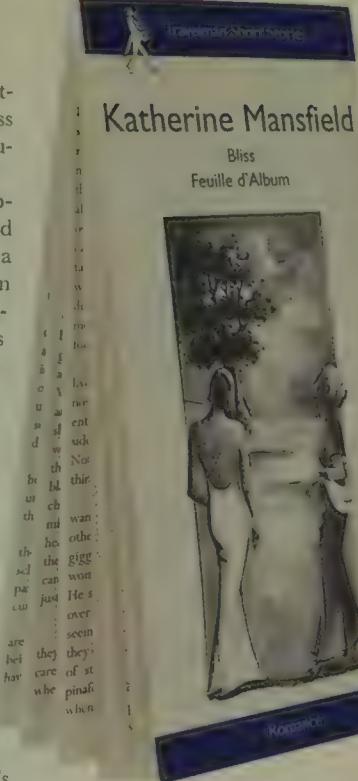
However, these fun books aside, the mini-book phenomenon is mirrored by an increasing trend for publishers to produce classics in small formats, from the Bloomsbury Classics series, to the Everyman's Library of Pocket Poets. The thinking is simple: small is beautiful, small is precious, small turns a commodity into a treasure, to be tucked away in a little box with your other favourite things.

Some seriously high-falutin' names have now got in on the act. Pushkin Press, a new publishing house, has been issuing pocket-sized volumes of classic foreign literature, including *Letters from the Palazzo Barbaro* by Henry James and *Casanova's Return to Venice* by Arthur Schnitzler. Melissa Ulfane, the founder of the publishing house, is an enthusiastic supporter of the small volume: "These books are magical and contain within them more than the sum of their parts—they are quite short, their mystery condensed and intense."

Even the greatest story ever told—namely the Bible—was carved up into more enticing chunks this autumn by Canongate with introductions by well-known writers. Fay Weldon has penned the intro to *St Paul's Letters to the Corinthians*, while AS Byatt introduces *The Song of Solomon* as "a cry of erotic longing and a description of erotic bliss, a lyrical drama whose speakers and episodes run into each other as in a vision".

Some critics fear the £1 editions might trivialise the Holy Book, but the general view among clerics is that the innovation represents an effective way of widening the Bible's appeal to those scared off by the full-length volume. Booksellers also talk of a "guilt hit" among those who have not looked at the Bible since schooldays.

The *London Review of Books* is currently collaborating with publishing house Profile Books to give some of its articles a longer life. One of their



Pocket-sized *Travelman Short Stories* look like maps, are designed to be read like books, and cost £1.

first titles, published last summer, was—with singular appropriateness—*The Smallest of All Persons Mentioned in the Records of Littleness*, a piece about Britain's most famous dwarf by young writer Gaby Wood.

But the *LRB* struck real gold with *The Clothes They Stood Up In* by Alan Bennett, the first story by one of Britain's best-known playwrights. Within six weeks of publication last July, Bennett's little volume had sold in excess of 75,000 copies, taking the best-seller lists by storm. A second Bennett short story will follow early next year.

Kate Griffin of Profile Books says: "Speaking personally, it's great to see something short. When you have two kids and a full-time job, it's a real blessing. I get depressed when I see books of 500 pages. There was a time when I was prepared to tackle *War and Peace*. These days, the *Evening Standard* is about all I can manage."

Her honest answer may hold the real key to the success of little books. In the modern era, most people have a short attention span—and precious little time to spare for reading. For them, the mini book represents salvation. This explains the flurry of small popular history books, usually covering one subject in a lively narrative style, ranging from *Cod* to *Fermat's Last Theorem* to *Longitude*, the latter (by Dava Sobel) an unlikely

best-seller on an unlikely subject.

Scheduled for publication next spring is a short book with a long title. *Tulipomania: The Story of the World's Most Coveted Flower and the Extraordinary Passions it Aroused*, by Mike Dash, is an exploration of the Dutch obsession with tulips in the 17th century. "There's an appetite for real life history with a strong narrative thread," says Dash. "People don't want to be bludgeoned over the head with scholarly detail and footnotes. The fact that these books are short is absolutely essential."

Robert McCrum, literary editor of *The Observer* and a former editor at Faber & Faber, agrees: "But a lot of the appeal is aspirational. If you're carrying a little hardback copy of *Longitude*, you're saying you're a cut above the person who carries a paperback of *The Diary of Bridget Jones*."

How long a lifespan the mini book will enjoy remains to be seen. The book trade is as prone to fashion as any other industry. McCrum describes the current mini-book trend as the transformation of the book into fashion accessory. "They are very attractive and very appealing. Perhaps most important of all, they are low-priced."

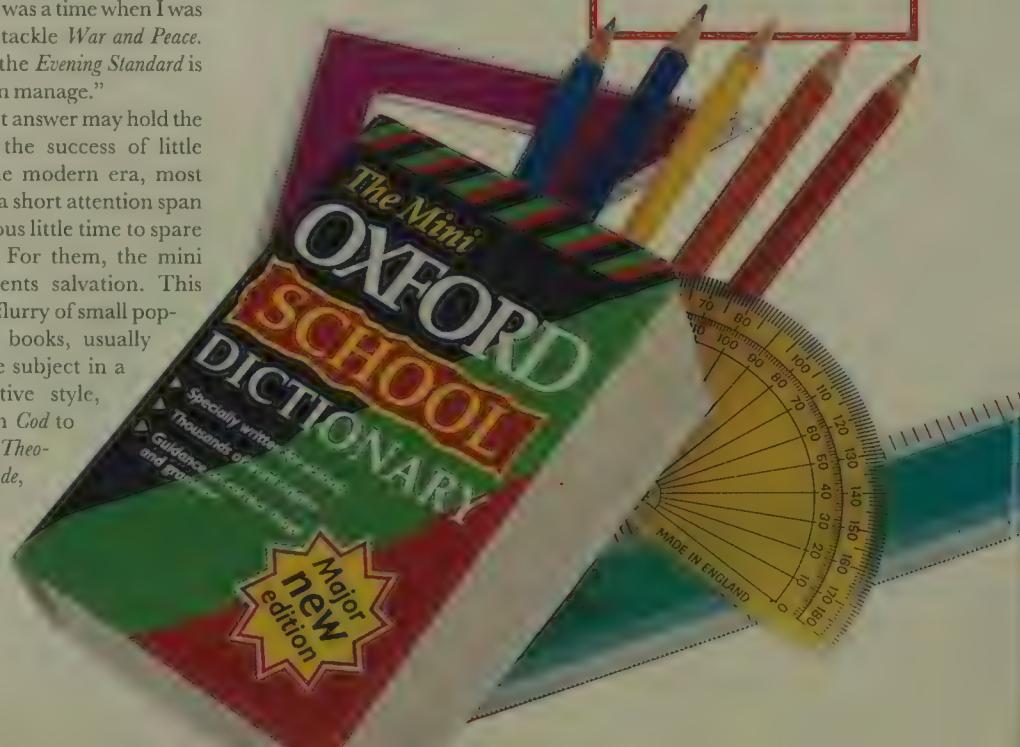
Does it matter if the book has become a fashion accessory? When the Penguin 60p books were first launched, people who bought no more than a couple of books a year suddenly started buying "books" by the dozen. For publishers and authors everywhere, that was good news. And who knows? Today's mini-book reader may—one day—end up tackling *War and Peace* □

Mini reference books, like this dictionary, will be welcomed by children for reducing the weight of their schoolbags.



The ILN Christmas choice

- 1 **The Little Book of Dreams**, by Joan Hanger (Penguin, £1.99).
- 2 **The Song of Solomon**, introduction by AS Byatt (Canongate, £1).
- 3 **A Christmas Carol**, by Charles Dickens (Running Press, £3.50).
- 4 **The Smallest of All Persons Mentioned in the Records of Littleness**, by Gaby Wood (Profile, £3.99).
- 5 **The Calm Technique**, by Paul Wilson (Thorsorn, £4.99).
- 6 **English Country Traditions** by Ian Niall (Running Press, £3.50).
- 7 **Casanova's Return to Venice**, by Arthur Schnitzler (Pushkin Press, £7).
- 8 **Bliss**, by Katherine Mansfield (Travelman, £1).
- 9 **The Mini Oxford School Thesaurus** (OUP, £3.99).
- 10 **The Magnetic Dog Companion** (Apple Press, £2.99).



Seasonal gifts for all

The best case scenario

Imagine a stress-free start and stress-free finish to your next holiday... it is possible. Packing the perfect travel wardrobe can be made effortless and enable you to enjoy your journey and break as an uncrushable woman.

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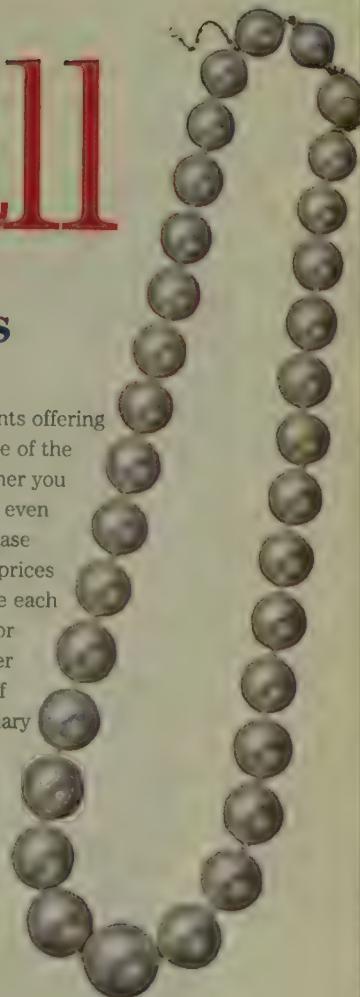
DIAFUN 8 x 30 MC carry the Zeiss name and are the product of 150 years

Seasonal gifts for all

Buying presents at auction

For an alternative source of unique presents offering excellent value for money, why not try one of the many Phillips auctions this winter? Whether you are looking for jewellery, silver or toys, or even Old Master paintings, sculptures or long-case clocks, we have items to suit all tastes at prices from £100. Catalogues are available before each sale and items can be viewed in advance or seen on our Internet site. If you have never bought at auction before, our friendly staff are happy to guide you. For an Auction Diary of sales, call Lucie Hearne on 0171-468 8358 (please quote ref ILN).

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All change at the Angel, Islington

As Christmas draws near, London is the place to soar with the angels—where else is there actually a part of town named after them? This year, The Angel is where you should be. As the new Sadler's Wells plunges into festivities, the glittering glass-fronted building is leading its entire neighbourhood into a renaissance. Shops and restaurants have reinvented themselves, ready to cope with anticipated hordes.

Exmouth Market has become one of the capital's hottest places to eat, a new Chez Gerard promises steak frites with slick service that will ensure you don't miss curtain up, and restaurants are appearing all along St John Street right down to Smithfield. Head north from the Wells for more action. Squeeze your way past overseas visitors to the antiques shops of Camden Passage, the perfect place to pick up a present. Or take a small friend to The Little Angel Theatre, which this Christmas is showing *The Secret Garden* for which a delightful set of puppets has been made (0171-226 1787). Waterstones on the Green opens until 10pm and will be having Christmas shopping evenings when you can buy Robert Harris' *Archangel* (Hutchinson, £16.99), the follow-up to *Fatherland*, set in Russia (0171-704 2280). And if their cookery books inspire you to try a special Christmas menu, Tesco's opposite is London's only seven-day, 24-hour supermarket, where you can shop till you drop.

We Londoners are surrounded by angels: join ILN on a simply heavenly tour.

Angels

Angels in art

The Wallace Collection, off Oxford Street, holds some of London's finest paintings, yet is a haven of calm compared with the capital's bigger and better-known galleries. What better time to visit than when you're sated with Xmas shopping? Admission is free, so dip in whenever you're in the area and wander among works that include sublime angels.

The Collection is displayed in the magnificent surroundings of Hertford House, a Grade II listed building in Manchester Square. Some 5,470 works of art are displayed in furnished rooms that evoke the atmosphere of a grand 19th-century town house. Although the Wallace is noted for its 18th-century French paintings, furniture and porcelain, it has many other treasures, including works by Rembrandt and Titian, armour, sculpture and Limoges enamels. The Wallace has recently introduced concert series in the magical setting of its galleries. See Top Tickets for details of this Christmas's highlights.

Curator Stephen Duffy introduces Angel with a Sword at the Wallace Collection

This little painting on an oak panel was almost certainly part of a much larger triptych with religious scenes, possibly on the subject of *The Last Judgment*. The angel may be St Michael. The picture was painted by Hans Memling, a German-born painter who by 1465 had settled in Bruges in Flanders and remained there until his death in 1494. He is now regarded as one of the finest artists working in the Southern Netherlands (now Belgium) in the 15th century, when there was a great flowering of religious and secular painting. The angel in this picture originally had a swirling sash (visible in an X-ray) covering part of the robe. There is a similar painting, perhaps from the same triptych, in the Louvre in Paris.

The Wallace Collection's picture was probably bought by Sir Richard Wallace with the rest of the collection of vicomte Both de Tazia which he acquired in 1872.



Best wishes:
the well at
Sadler's Wells.





LEFT: THE WALLACE COLLECTION; THE BRITISH ART LIBRARY; RIGHT: THE FELD-JANNART LIBRARY

V&Angels

The V&A is full of angels and you can have a wonderful time seeking them out. On December 2 and 8, Mary Stirling, V&A guide, is doing two tours for Friends of the V&A focusing on Gabriel and his attendants bearing their glad tidings in Byzantine mosaics and ivories, medieval enamels, embroideries and woodcarving. To join the V&A Friends, call 0171-938 8444. A year's subscription is £35 and benefits include free entry to the museum with a guest, free subscription to the V&A magazine and a Friends programme of events, guided tours and behind-the-scenes visits. Membership would also make a great Christmas present for a friend. Or organise your own V&A tour to take in this *Angeli Laudantes* tapestry in wool and silks, left, designed by Burne-Jones in the 1870s and woven by Morris & Co in 1894.

Well Healed

In addition to offering some of London's most stylish home furnishings, Heal's is a treasure trove of witty gifts, right. The vast range of confectionery, tree decorations, scented candles, crackers and original present ideas make it one of the best places in town for getting into the Christmas spirit. There are also more substantial purchases, such as contemporary hand-knotted rugs from Tibet, textured cushion covers and the latest in leather chairs.

all around us

Following its gradual re-emergence after four years under wraps, the Albert Memorial, with its golden angels, has been re-opened by Her Majesty the Queen. This

Victorian folly once again delights visitors to Hyde Park and the Royal Albert Hall with its burnished statues and glittering mosaics.

Angels heralded

The Andipa Gallery in Walton Street is a treasure trove of Byzantine icons. Until December 24, it is holding a special exhibition *Art: The Herald Angels*, with paintings, drawings and icons for sale priced between £50-£10,000. The Andipa Gallery, 162 Walton Street, Knightsbridge, London SW3 2JL. Tel: 0171-589 2371.

Archangel Michael, right, tempera on panel with brass cover, 19th century Russian, £2,400.



Pasta perfection

Gourmets beat a regular path to Carluccio's, well known since 1991 as the top destination in London for unusual and original Italian produce. This Christmas, angel hair pasta is just one of a hamperful of delicacies. Other delights include beautiful boxes of handmade Italian chocolates, flavoured oils, natural fruit jams, jars of whole artichokes and cherries and, for the ultimate gift that's certain to be appreciated, a year's supply of extra virgin olive oil. All come wrapped and beautifully presented. If you can't make it to the store at 28A Neal Street in Covent Garden, call 0171-240 1487 for the new Carluccio's mail order and gift catalogue—a treat in itself with illustrations of Italian ingredients in boxes that are delivered nationwide.



Heavenly host

Carol Pazzotta of the National Gallery introduces *Virgin and Child with Angels* by a follower of Fra Angelico

The Virgin and Child are surrounded by nine angels, four of whom support a large canopy ornamented with shields. Two of the other angels bring their hands together in prayer, while one peeps over the Virgin's shoulder, passing the Christ Child a goldfinch, the symbol of his future Passion. The figures occupy a space which is not of this world. Behind them is a thicket of flowering trees, while beneath their feet lies a marble floor, covered with a beautiful carpet decorated with floral designs. As a symbol of chastity and purity, the Virgin was often depicted in an enclosed garden, an image borrowed from the *Song of Songs*. The confined space in the picture, with the trees, canopy and carpet enclosing the figures, seems to emphasise this notion. The Virgin alone gazes directly outwards, inviting a connection between the beholder and the heavenly space.

Despite the monumental impression created by its perspective, the painting is very small, indicating that it was intended for private devotion. The shields in the canopy, now all but illegible, probably once bore the arms of the patron. The artist has taken delight in the decorative quality of his work, selecting for his angels a variety of poses and costumes. The two angels in the foreground wear fashionable headbands or mazzocchi. The four supporting the cloth of gold canopy wear tunics, each a subtly different shade of red. The feathers on their elegant wings have been picked out by scratching into the gold leaf. The picture is attributed to a follower of Fra Angelico. Angelico, a Dominican friar and one of the leading painters in 15th-century Florence, was nicknamed thus for the angelic quality of his painting. It might be said that the painter of these delightful angels was similarly blessed.

THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

Shopping takes wing

The moment you step inside Angel Hughes' shop in Barnes you feel you never want to leave. The owner's eclectic taste, embracing antique glass rolling-pins, Gustavian-style painted furniture, faded quilts, hand-stitched samplers, French wardrobes, bunches of lavender and piles of neatly-folded linen, defies classification, but creates a magical effect. Even the price tags—hand-made luggage labels, tied with real string—have an air of romance.

Angel, whose passion for the hand-crafted is rivalled only by her love of old fabrics, devotes months of planning to the shop's annual Christmas show. In keeping with this year's Russian theme, she has sewn plump babushka dolls from richly textured materials to set alongside the velvet hearts, damask-covered baubles, gilded shells and glorious brocade-clad angels that radiate goodwill from every corner.

Tobias and the Angel, 68 White Hart Lane, London SW13 0PZ (0181-296 0058). Mon-Sat 10am-6pm. Christmas show Nov 18-Dec 24. Orders from the catalogue until Dec 10. Closed Nov 16-17 and Dec 25-Jan 3.



What will the best-dressed woman be wearing this Christmas? Thierry Mugler's Angel fragrance, of course. The Parisian designer describes his signature perfume, inspired by Jerry Hall, as "dreams in a bottle". It comes in a star-shaped, hand-polished flacon—a refillable objet d'art.



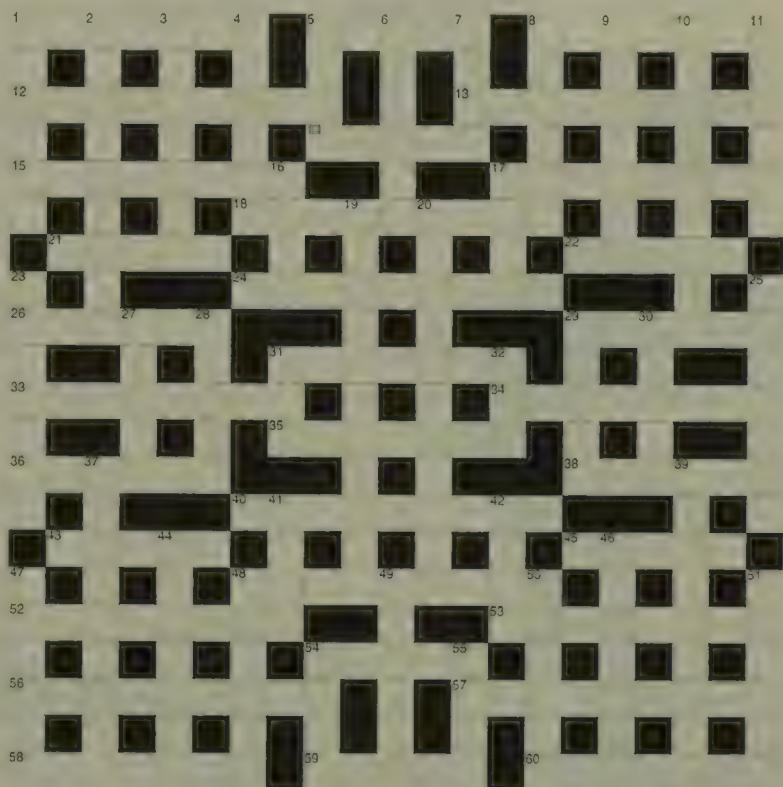
CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

The pictures shown left are intended to help solve the clues.

ACROSS

1. For the most part including scrambled eggs. (7)
5. Role taken by youth leader in providing time for fun. (5)
8. Stunned to find an inspiring figure lying around. (7)
12. They had a Christmas visitor. (9)
13. Forty love to me at Christmas. (4,5)
14. Opera produced to reduced scale. (5)
15. One saint moving from a European country. (8)
17. Rich mole stew. (8)
18. Noble turn-out did something when approached. (9)
21. Go down to greet the Christmas newcomer. (5)
22. Number of Poles around before Christmas Day. (5)
24. The man not getting the pictures can be cruel. (9)
26. One takes a little time to find a flower. (6)
29. Container vehicle added. (6)
31. Break the habit with a bit of luck—something fishy here! (7)
33. If a girl comes between her parents there's a scene. (8)
34. Finished before animal comes back more than full. (8)
35. Think of taking time out to act as go-between. (7)
36. Anticipate getting caught with some expense. (6)
38. Some party lads and lassies taking a rest inside. (6)
40. Sweet wine, very old, is one a man can take in. (9)
43. Silly Annie does a dance. (5)
45. He's working when he's playing. (5)
48. Coming soon with a
52. One attempt to move the load inside shows great devotion. (8)
53. Stamps on relatives producing fur. (8)
54. Money needed for a small pair to go on frozen pond. (5)
56. We are about to strike new one off for drinking. (5,4)
57. A girl takes one in and goes back to the grind for ages. (9)
58. Entertainment offered here at the new rate. (7)
59. It's so warm one may get drunk. (5)
60. Royalty in the chair. (7)
61. Christmas gift? (9)
62. One attempt to move the load inside shows great devotion. (8)
63. Stamps on relatives producing fur. (8)
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67. Entertainment offered here at the new rate. (7)
68. It's so warm one may get drunk. (5)
69. Royalty in the chair. (7)
70. Christmas gift? (9)
71. Agreement about having to move up in exercises. (4)
72. Had a swell time. (6)
73. Wonderful way to reclaim composure. (7)
74. Feeling of people in it after being on a mission. (9)
75. Want to throw teacher in a river. (6)
76. Observe the rise of the privileged classes. (4)
77. Chaos comes sweeping inside. (4)
78. Boxing day delivery. (6-5)
79. Notable rice dish for the festivity. (11)
80. Dance with a bird—that's the man for a Christmas feast! (7)
81. He's made to stand up after a fall. (7)
82. These aren't the ones he's to have dealt with. (5)
83. Nothing like being in the right joint! (5)
84. Find some hot punch essential if offering game. (5)
85. Go through with a gun. (5)
86. Strange airs about American in another
87. Country. (6)
88. One of those going forward on foot. (3)
89. Criticise order to be in time for the entertainment. (9)
90. Eve's hang-ups (9)
91. Light-hearted creatures imagined losing her head. (4)
92. Bad things happen when the factories don't start. (4)
93. Are in a home and most easily contacted. (7)
94. Business with flighty Ellen, Paddy's girl. (7)
95. One has no sense of how twin might arrange the thing. (6)
96. Put up with having little money when you get appreciation. (6)
97. Meaning to be heartless possibly proving a mystery. (6)
98. Shout with pain if you're afraid. (6)
99. Place of entertainment not started by cheating. (6)
100. Attack with missiles and hide. (4)
101. Throw out when occasion arises. (4)

Answers on page 74



CHRISTMAS QUIZ

A group of celebrities invite you to test your general knowledge against a set of questions on their favourite subjects.



SUE LAWLEY

Broadcaster for television and radio since 1970 and a presenter on BBC Television's *Nationwide* and *Tonight* programmes, she has also made numerous documentaries. Sue Lawley has been presenter of *Desert Island Discs* for Radio 4 since 1988. She is married, with two grown-up children, and lives in London.

1 Which little comedian has appeared more often than anyone else in the 25-year history of *Desert Island Discs*? For an extra point, how many times?

2 Which famous long-playing record did Marilyn Monroe, right, WVC Fields, below right, and Sonny Liston have a hand in promoting?

3 What is the connection between Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*?

For an extra point, can you name the composer of another opera called *The Barber of Seville*?

4 How many symphonies did the following composers write?

a Brahms

b Schumann

c Haydn

5 Which famous composer was a mourner at Beethoven's funeral in 1827, only to die himself in the following year?

6 Who thought that:

a Paris was worth a mass?

b England was "a nation of shopkeepers"?

c Italy was nothing more than "a geographical expression"?

d If you were tired of London you were "tired of life".

7 A Queen and a First Minister ruled in 1600 and 1900. The name of the Queen had changed, but the name of the first minister hadn't. What was it?

8 Which British contemporary author has made Wimbledon, SW19, the setting for a series of successful novels?

9 Which author took the Oxford professor of poetry to look for a thimoceros in Borneo and wrote a hilarious account of their journey?

10 Who is the only leader this century of the Conservative and Unionist Party not to have become Prime Minister?

11 How many symphonies did the following composers write?

a Brahms

b Schumann

c Haydn

12 Who was Queen Victoria?

a Queen of a mass?

b Queen of a nation of shopkeepers?

c Queen of a geographical expression?

d Queen of a tired of life?

13 Queen and First Minister?

14 Queen and First Minister?

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100 Queen and First Minister?



MAX HASTINGS

Editor, London Evening Standard; formerly editor, *The Daily Telegraph*, war correspondent, *The Sunday Times*, and BBC reporter on the Falklands war. Writes on military history, and country life and sports.

1 The collective name for snipe is a wisp; what is a group of woodcock known as?

2 In his song, how many hours from Tulsa was Gene Pitney, left, when he was unhappy and decided he wasn't coming home any more?

3 How many times does "Ha" appear in the title of Roddy Doyle's famous novel about Paddy Clarke?

4 In the calendar of the French Revolutionaries how many days were there in the week?

5 How many of the States of the USA begin with the initial 'M'?

6 How many feet are there in a fathom?

7 How many Provinces are there in Ireland?

8 Since 1666, how many Williams have ruled England?

9 How many men were mentioned in the title of the 1950s film directed by Sidney Lumet and starring Henry Fonda?

10 How many rulers or authorities are there in a diocese?



MAEVE BINCHY

Irish writer and broadcaster. Born in Dublin, where she still lives with her husband Gordon Snell. Maeve Binchy was a school teacher and columnist for *The Irish Times* until the world-wide success of her first novel *Light a Penny Candle* in 1982. Since then she has published six further novels and a collection of short stories.

1 By how many gods did Lars Porsena of Clusium swear according to Macaulay in *The Lays of Ancient Rome*?

2 In his song, how many hours from Tulsa was Gene Pitney, left, when he was unhappy and decided he wasn't coming home any more?

3 How many times does "Ha" appear in the title of Roddy Doyle's famous novel about Paddy Clarke?

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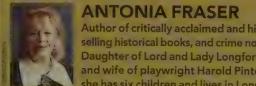
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ANTONIA FRASER

Author of critically acclaimed and high selling historical books, and crime novels. Daughter of Lord and Lady Longford and wife of playwright Harold Pinter, she has six children and lives in London.

1 How many crowned Queens regnant have there been?

2 What is the common Christian name for a Queen Consort?

3 Queen Elizabeth I was named for what relation?

4 One consort was known as "Queen Henry". Which King was she named for?

5 Who was the Winter Queen and where and when was she Winter?

6 What was the blood relationship between two 16th-century Queens regnant, Mary Tudor, below, and Mary Queen of Scots?

7 Mary Seymour was the daughter of a Queen Consort, but not of a King. Which Queen?

8 Queen Victoria had five daughters. How many were known under the title of Queen?

9 When were there last three living Queens in this country?

10 If you had the Salt Law operating in England (as it did in France), who would be the present monarch of Great Britain, in place of Queen Elizabeth II?

11 Who was the Salt Law?

12 Who was the Queen of Sheba?

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SUSAN HAMPSHIRE

Quintessentially English actress whose many starring roles on television include Fleur in *The Forsyte Saga* and Lady Glencora in *The Pallisers*. She has many film and stage roles and, as a devoted gardener, books on the subject to her credit. She is married to Sir Eddie Kupferman and lives in London and Oxfordshire.

1 Which jockey retired in March 1996 with over 3,500 victories?

2 Who was captain of Tottenham Hotspur when they won the double in 1961?

3 Who was captain of England when they won the World Cup in 1966?

4 Which Englishman won Wimbledon three years in a row in the 1930s?

5 Who played Juliet to Richard III's Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*?

6 Which Spanish athlete won the 1500 metres in the Barcelona Olympics in 1992?

7 Who was the outstanding player of the 1953 FA Cup Final?

8 Which actress wrote the book *As I See Us*?

9 What was the name of Fleur Forsyte's dog in *Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga*?

10 Who played Henry V and Richard III in Peter Hall's revival of *Shakespeare's history plays* in 1964?

11 Who was the Queen of Sheba?

12 Who was the Queen of Sheba?

13 Who was the Queen of Sheba?

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21 Who was the Queen of Sheba?



SIR ELTON JOHN

A professional composer, pianist and singer since 1965 and one of the largest-selling recording artists of all time, Elton John was knighted in 1998 for services to charity. His *Candle in the Wind*, sung at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, has raised many millions of pounds for charity.

- I have some lilies in my pond. Can you name the artist who made painting these flowers famous?
- Who was famous for painting boys in pink and blue?
- Who has the nickname "Jack the Dripper" because of his painting techniques?
- Who sold his collection of paintings, left to his wife and children, and headed to paradise?
- Although considered the greatest figure painter of the second half of the 20th century in Britain, some observers might find his distortions contradict this opinion. One of the Pope's would certainly have been dissatisfied with his appearance. Who is the painter?
- Dissecting animals made both these English artists famous, one in the 18th century and one in the 20th century. Who are they?
- Which painter has a name like mine and is famous for painting American flags and beer cans?
- Who made a movie called *Sleep* which was so long and uneventful that it made most of the audience nod off as well?
- Which artist, a member of a famous family of artists from Preston, painted his prosperous and elegant sisters in their gardens and houses in England during the mid-18th century?
- Which famous sculptor from Yorkshire liked his women solid but "holesy"?



MARTYN LEWIS

Presenter of BBC1 Television News and Today's the Day (with whose team these questions were compiled), President of a number of hospice charities, including Help the Hospices and the Cambridge and Hope House Children's hospices. Author of *Tears and Smiles: The Hospice Handbook*.

- First inaugurated as US President on 20 January 1993, Bill Clinton, below, was once the Governor of which state?
- Born on 11 February 1800, which photographic pioneer lived at Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire?
- Knighted on 4 March 1975, who starred in the films *The Gold Rush* and *City Lights*?
- The first episode of *Uptight*, *Downstairs* was screened on 10 October 1971. What was the Bellamy family's address?
- Born on 18 November 1923, who was the first American astronaut to travel in space?
- Which author, who died on 22 December 1943, created Jemima Puddleduck and Benjamin Bunny?
- On 1 April 1957, which BBC current affairs programme fooled viewers into believing that spaghetti grew on trees?
- Born on 19 May 1861, which Australian soprano gave her name to a dessert?
- Who married playwright Arthur Miller on 29 June 1956?
- At which

1 In which fictitious country would you find the place names Silverbridge, Framley and Ullathorne?

2 Tracy, Blanche and Sweetheart are the names of dogs referred to in one of Shakespeare's plays. Which play?

3 What is the colloquial name for the easings flown by British merchant ships?

4 What was the name of the admiral who commanded the Spanish Armada?

5 Which nation, late in the last century, built two circular warships and a circular Royal yacht?

6 On whose gravestone were inscribed the words, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water"?

7 There was a word that the Ephraimites were unable to pronounce correctly. This enabled their enemies, the Gillidites, to catch them out. What was the word?

8 What is or was?

The Arabian Bird?

9 Sir Christopher Wren said, "I'm going to dine with some men."

If anyone calls

Say I'm designing St. Paul's?"

What is the name given to that form of verse?

10 For how long did the General Strike of 1926 last?

11 Who, when he visited

Durham Cathedral, was under the impression that the

Venerable Bede was a woman?

12 What did the youthful AE (Shagbald Lad) Housman have in common with Kenneth (15 and in the Willow) Grahame's son?



LORD ARCHER
Novelist and short-story writer, with *Kane and Abel* and *First Among Equals* among his best-selling titles. Jeffrey Archer was formerly MP for Louth and Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party. Lord Archer lives in London and Cambridge.

- Who was the only Nobel Prize winner to play first-class cricket?
- Who understood Laurence Olivier, right, in Shakespeare's *Comedians* at Stratford-upon-Avon and in what year?
- Who is the only man known to have turned down the Order of Merit, the OBE?
- Two of the most successful novels ever written, in terms of sales, were by women who never wrote again. Name one of the books.
- Which great Italian artist was tried for murder?
- Who won an Oscar for an acting performance although he never spoke a word in the role he played?
- Which two Presidents of the United States died on the same day?
- Where was the Second Olympic Games held in 1900?
- Fill in the next three letters: O.T.T.F.E.S.S.
- Who is third in line to the throne?

11 Born on

19 May 1861,

which Australian soprano

gave her name to a dessert?

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22 December 1943,

created Jemima Puddleduck and Benjamin Bunny?

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19 Who is third in line to the throne?

20 Who was the only Nobel Prize winner to play first-class cricket?

21 Who understood Laurence Olivier, right, in Shakespeare's *Comedians* at Stratford-upon-Avon and in what year?

22 Which two Presidents of the United States died on the same day?

23 Where was the Second Olympic Games held in 1900?

24 Fill in the next three letters: O.T.T.F.E.S.S.

25 Who is fourth in line to the throne?

26 Who was the first to win the

Grand National?

27 Who was the only man known to have turned down the Order of Merit, the OBE?

28 Who was the only man known to have turned down the Order of Merit, the OBE?

29 Who was the first to win the

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Dolphin Square Hotel

► Ideally situated for central London, Dolphin Square's 151 all-suite hotel is set amongst 3½ acres of landscaped gardens. Convenient for theatres, art galleries, Westminster and within short walking distance of Piccadilly tube. The newly refurbished reception complements the new Brasserie and Clipper Bar. There's a Health & Sports Club, swimming pool, gymnasium, and squash and tennis courts. Weekend rates available.

Dolphin Square Hotel is English Tourist Board 5 Crown Commended. New restaurant, "Rhodes in the Square" — with executive chef Gary Rhodes.

*Dolphin Square Hotel, Chichester Street, London SW1V 3LX.
Call Dolphin Square's Reservation Team on tel: 0171-798 8890 or
fax: 0171-798 8896; email: dolphin@btinternet.com*



Savour Victorian elegance in the heart of stylish London

▼ In a terrace of white-painted, early Victorian houses in the heart of South Kensington and only a 10-minute walk from Harrods, Number Sixteen is ideally located for shopping, theatre and the West End. The hotel offers style, elegance and seclusion. Guests can relax in the comfortable informality of the drawing room and help themselves to a drink from the honour bar in the library or enjoy the conservatory which opens on to the award-winning walled garden.

*Number Sixteen, 16 Sumner Place, London SW7 3EG;
tel: 0171-589 5232; fax: 0171-584 8615;
Tel USA Toll Free: 1 800 592 5387.
Reservations@numbersixteenhotel.co.uk*



Relax in legendary surroundings

▼ The famous Mayfair nightclub, Legends, now has a restaurant, Maze, offering the best in modern British cuisine, as well as a sophisticated cocktail bar. Designed by prominent architect Eva Jiricna, Maze offers a relaxed ambience and friendly service, which makes the restaurant a must when on a shopping trip in Bond Street. Competitively priced menus are complemented by an extensive wine list.

Maze is the perfect evening destination to beat off those winter blues. Enjoy the wide range of cocktails on offer and take advantage of the Happy Hour (5pm-10pm) at its bar, open every Thursday and Friday from 5.30pm until late. Maze is also available for exclusive hire for either corporate or private functions and parties.

*Maze@Legends, 29 Old Burlington Street, London W1X 1LB;
tel: 0171-437 9933; www.legends.co.uk*



A period mansion situated in Ashdown Forest

► This beautiful Victorian manor, set in 186 acres of landscaped grounds, lake and parkland in the heart of Ashdown Forest, and within easy access of Gatwick Airport, creates an impressive venue for short breaks.

The luxurios bedrooms and suites are all beautifully designed and exquisitely furnished, and dining in the award-winning Anderida Restaurant, complemented by its extensive wine cellar, is a gourmet experience. The exclusive Country Club offers the most impressive leisure facilities and health and beauty therapies, allowing you to relax in style and relish complete luxury.

Two-night winter breaks are available from £87.50 per person per night, inclusive of a table d'hôte dinner and full English breakfast (excluding public holidays). Preferential single rates are also available.

*Ashdown Park, Wych Cross, Nr Forest Row, East Sussex RH15 5JR;
tel: (01342) 824988; fax: (01342) 826206;
e-mail sales@ashdownpark.co.uk Website www.ashdownpark.co.uk*



A WORLD OF



Magnificent country house hotel

▼ Set in 60 acres of Hampshire's rich rolling countryside, this magnificent country house hotel offers the splendours of the past combined with every modern amenity. At Tyne Hall, quality and comfort go hand in hand to ensure your stay is relaxed and memorable.

All the bedrooms and suites at Tyne Hall have their own delightful and individual charm: there are intimate garden suites and honeymoon cottages, suites with four-poster beds and others with Jacuzzi baths. With excellent leisure facilities, beautiful gardens and woodland walks to explore, and evenings spent dining and dining in gentle luxury, what could be more idyllic for a winter break?

Prices start from £87.50 per person per night, for a minimum 2-night stay, sharing twin/double accommodation, inclusive of a table d'hôte dinner and full English breakfast (this offer does not apply on public holidays).

*Rotherwick, Hook, Hampshire RG27 9AZ;
tel: (01256) 764881; fax: (01256) 768141;
e-mail sales@tynehall.co.uk Website www.tynehall.com*

Relax, laze and swim in a tropical paradise

► Silvery sands, warm, crystal-clear waters, fabled hospitality... this paradise island awaits you at the end of Air Mauritius' non-stop flight. Fly from Heathrow on Fridays or Sundays in comfort aboard the state of the art Airbus A 430 or on Mondays from Manchester on the newly configured Boeing 767, with a choice of meals in all classes on all services. Spoil yourself with a breathtaking helicopter transfer from the airport to your hotel.

*Mauritian Tourist Promotion Authority, 32 Elevation Place, London SW7 5NW; tel: 0171-584 3666.
Air Mauritius London Office, tel: 0171-434 4375 or
Manchester Airport Office, tel: 0161 498 9909.*



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*For further information,
tel: 0171-436 2931*

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RIVER & OCEAN CRUISES

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▼ Majestically dominating the western promenade, The Grand Hotel has over the last century played host to royalty, the rich and the famous, and has been affectionately known by many as the "Palace". With its elaborate exterior and lavish interior, The Grand epitomises the magnificence of the Victorian era.

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The Grand is the perfect resort for a winter break, with prices starting from £60 per person per night for a minimum two-night stay (excluding public holidays). Preferential single rates are available on request.

*King Edwards Parade, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4EQ;
tel: (01323) 412345; fax: (01323) 412333*



TOP TEN MOST INVITED PARTY GUESTS

1. Sir Elton John
2. Ed and Carol Victor
3. Lord and Lady Palumbo
4. Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall
5. Viscount and Viscountess Linley
6. Hugh Grant and Elizabeth Hurley
7. Sam Taylor Wood and Jay Jopling
8. Jemima and Jodie Kidd
9. Bryan and Lucy Ferry
10. Tony and Cherie Blair QC

HIGHEST-EARNING ACTORS IN THE WORLD

1. Arnold Schwarzenegger
2. Jim Carrey
3. Tom Hanks
4. Tom Cruise
5. Harrison Ford
6. Clint Eastwood
7. Sylvester Stallone
8. Robin Williams
9. Roseanne
10. Michael Douglas

\$46m
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10 BEST-DRESSED WOMEN

1. Nicole Kidman
2. Uma Thurman
3. Liz Hurley
4. Minnie Driver
5. Kim Basinger
6. Melanie Griffith
7. Jemima Khan
8. Shakira Caine
9. Marie Helvin
10. Felicity Kendal



List MANIA

In an age when the individual is increasingly defined by their material possessions, Oliver James exposes our obsession with lists as the barometers of success.

SHOPPING LIST

- Cartier gold Trinity watch
- Nokia 9000 Communicator
- Montblanc fountain pen
- Chanel 2005 handbag
- Krug champagne six-pack
- A weekend retreat at Babington House
- Canon Ixus camera
- Herme
- Estée Lauder
- Dazzling
- Narciso Rodriguez
- Reebok
- Prozac



FASTEST PRODUCTION CARS IN THE WORLD

1. Lamborghini Diablo
2. Ferrari Testarossa
3. Ferrari 348ts
4. Ferrari 348tb
5. Porsche 928 GT
6. Porsche 911 Turbo
7. Porsche 928S Series 4
8. Porsche 911 Carrera 2
9. Lotus Esprit Turbo SE
10. TVR 450SEAC

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Christmas is a time for lists. Not just the kind we make for ourselves—of things to do, presents to buy, people to send Christmas cards to, and food for the Big Meal—but also the other, less practical and tiresome kind—those that we read in magazines and newspapers. Although these recur throughout the year, from the 400 richest people to the 100 greatest rock bands, Christmas is the time when the list-makers go into overdrive.

Everyone and everything, from the Event of the Year to the Man of the Year to the Party of the Year, is ranked. We read these hierarchies avidly, even though we know perfectly well that they have no scientific value and usually tell us more about the prejudices of the publication concerned than the subject in question.

So why do we have to make more and longer lists of things to do? You do not need to be Sigmund Freud to explain why we make lists as such, their practical value is self-evident. But what has changed enormously is the sheer quantity of objects and activities that have to be remembered and the limited amount of time available to us in which to do the remembering.

One reason for this is that we are much more affluent: within the 16 wealthiest nations in the world, Gross Domestic Product per head of population increased six-fold between 1900-87. With this huge increase in wealth came corresponding expenditure on consumer durables. But an important difference between the British and the rest of Europe is the amount of time we have to enjoy the fruits of our labours. Within the EU as a whole, 20 per cent of men work an average of 46 hours a week, whereas in Britain 40 per cent do so. In British dual-earner families, one in three men work more than 48 hours a week compared with one in 16 women (not including work done in the home). Thus there is remarkably little time to spend the money they earn.

This is exacerbated by two additional problems. Finding the precise items in the shops has become a major organisational task in itself, especially at Christmas time. After an exhausting morning making enquiries on the phone, thousands of men can be seen on a typical Saturday afternoon charging around London's streets and stores consulting their lists. They desperately dash from Peter Jones in Sloane Square, where they have identified the cheapest and most efficient mobile telephone, to Oxford Street, where they have pinpointed that button-down shirt, to Hatton Garden, where they can get their watch fixed. There is barely time to pick up the parking tickets from the screens of their Mercedes and People Carriers.

The second problem is maintaining the consumer products once you have bought them. Right now I have a couch in need of new legs, a teapot that needs special glue to mend it and a video that is on the blink. Once children join the consumerist party, two parents can easily use up most of their spare time just keeping all the machines and objects in their home working.

No wonder, then, that we need lists. The motto for our age should be "List or die". But why on earth would we, exhausted and raddled from a heavy day at the shops, slump into our baths and actually enjoy reading yet more lists in magazines and papers—of presents to buy, the richest men, the most beautiful women, the areas where property prices have risen the most?

The answer is that back in the primordial swamp where our genes evolved more than five million years ago, the ranking of others emerged as a valuable human instinct. It enabled social organisation to occur, so that each member of a clan knew their role and tasks. Evaluation of our relative status by comparing ourselves to others is found in all peoples throughout history. But, of late, several trends have led to a substantial increase in such comparisons.

The fundamental change has been in how we define our identities. Since the 60s, the shift from a collectivist to an individualist society has accelerated. In the former, identity is ascribed on the basis of kinship ties and gender, preordained by birth. The goal of the ascribed self is to put other people's and the group's interests before one's own, through a willingness and ability to feel and think what others are thinking and feeling, to absorb this information without being told and to help others satisfy their wishes and realise their goals. The erasing of hedonistic and selfish desires is valued as part of the successful execution of social roles and obligations, the cardinal virtue is sensitivity to the potential impact of one's own actions upon the common fate.

By contrast, in individualist societies, identity is "achieved" by educational, occupational and economic activity, through open competition in a supposedly meritocratic system regardless of gender, class and race. The goal of the individualist is to express himself, whether through hedonism, achievement or consumerism. In such societies, the self is defined by reference to inner feelings and thoughts rather than to externally preordained roles, such as kinship ties like "mother" or "husband".

But the new individualism creates a problem: if I am not to define myself by my family or gender, then what should I use? One solution has been to increase the extent to which we do so through our purchases. Consumerism has become a major way of signalling to others who you are. Having Reeboks rather than Adidas matters to your children, but adults have exactly the same fetishes on a much grander (and more expensive and time-consuming) scale. Getting this particular model of BMW or People Carrier; having this rather than that kitchen design, these, and a thousand other decisions, are used to say "I am different from you". Increasingly, we are what we purchase.

But of equal importance, the shift towards individualism has left us unsure about the criteria to employ when trying to define our status. We read those lists of people and parties partly to rank ourselves against the people in them and partly to fantasise about what it might be like to be them (or have their parties). They offer us new ways of ranking ourselves in the absence of the traditional ones of social class and gender.

More than any other single change, it is television that has enabled this revolution to occur. Before TV it would not have occurred to the vast majority of the population to compare themselves to the famous people they read about in papers and magazines or heard on the wireless. TV makes us feel we know them and encourages us to see ourselves as just like them. It has

created a nation of Wannabes, obsessively and enviously comparing ourselves to others, always wanting what we have not got. In bed, at work and out shopping, we are constantly looking for ways to be someone else.

The hugely popular Spice Girls told us what they want, what they really, really want: they are not satisfied with what they have got. *The Diary of Bridget Jones*, about a scatty young woman who would seem to want for nothing but is dissatisfied, has sold a million copies. These are signs of an epidemic of relative deprivation, the feeling that you deserve more than what you have.

Its cause is advanced capitalism's demand for a constant supply of burgeoning needs to fuel economic growth. If we were satisfied with what we have, how could Sony or Ford or Microsoft seduce us with the "new" and "better" products which enable them to expand?

The awful truth is that the very system which makes us so affluent needs us to suffer misery and dissatisfaction. This is borne out by the statistics. Depression has risen three- then ten-fold (depending on which studies you believe), even allowing for our greater tendency to talk about our problems. Compulsions such as alcoholism, drug abuse, eating disorders and gambling have mushroomed. The number of crimes of violence against the person recorded by the police rose from 6,000 in 1950 to 253,000 last year, only some of which is caused by increased reporting.

Those lists of people and parties offer us new ways of ranking ourselves in society

There are ever-more precisely marketed products that create a fetishistic concern to have "this" rather than "that", all in the name of a bogus individuality. Money can even be made from the emotional breakdowns which result from these false ambitions and identities, by selling pills and therapeutic services. The divorce industry, which feeds on 40 per cent of marriages ending prematurely, is fuelled by the idea that there is a better partner, better sex, a better life out there just waiting for you if you are brave enough to try and Have It All.

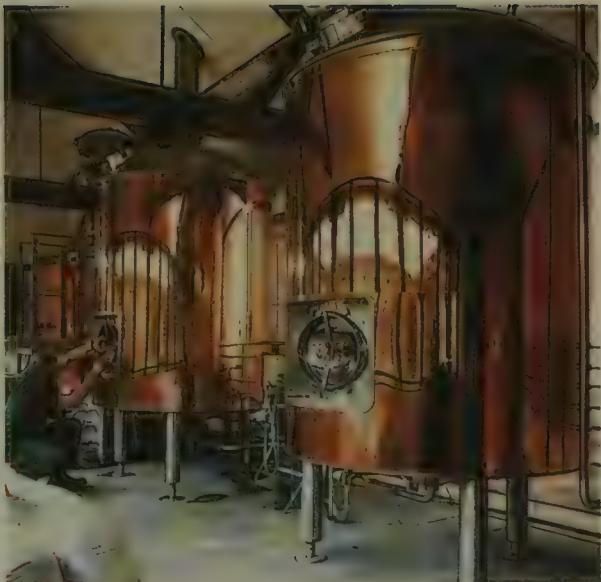
Spurious individualism, defined through purchases, and over-stimulated aspirations are the rock on which our wealth and unhappiness are built. TV programmes dangling glamorous "lifestyles" before our eyes are the building blocks of our sense that the grass could be greener.

Not that there is anything wrong with capitalism as such, nor is there a conspiracy of bankers and retailers aiming to make us miserable. But our personal lists and the ones we read in the press are a result of the lack of time, money and self-definition we are experiencing. Once we understand this, perhaps we could stop forever worrying that there is something else we should be doing and someone else we should be, and instead rejoice that we are many times more affluent and healthy than ever before in the history of the world.

Oliver James is best known for having made Peter Mandelson, MP cry on TV but before that he worked for six years as a clinical psychologist in a mental hospital. His book, *Britain On The Couch—Why We're Unhappier Compared With 1950 Despite Being Richer*, is now available in paperback (Arrow, £7.99) and a series of programmes based on the book will be broadcast on Channel 4 in February.



SEASONAL



Christmas ales are the latest speciality of the burgeoning and highly successful micro breweries. Michael Jackson, below, does the rounds.

The quiet revolutionaries who are Britain's microbreweries—small independents making limited batches of distinctive brews—are delving ever-deeper into the history of beer-making. Lost recipes and ancient techniques are being revived and are proving a huge hit with modern tastes.

A good beer is more complicated to make than a good wine, and if the brewer is successful the resulting drink should have a subtlety and complexity to rival its grape-based cousins. But by the early 1970s this was a fact that seemed to have been forgotten: the trend was towards blander beers that could be mass marketed around the country. Britain was down to a handful of "homebrew houses" when they were rediscovered by the Campaign for Real Ale, and a new generation of small breweries sprung up. The movement quickly spread to the United States and beyond. The past few years have seen a quantum leap in specialist beers' popularity and some seriously stylish microbreweries have appeared. In London, restaurants with their own brewing facilities include fashionable Belgo and Mash, where customers expect and appreciate a wide range of unusually-flavoured beers. In addition to the many newcomers to the scene, existing breweries are making more beers than before, often in revived or new styles: anything from chocolate stouts to cherry ales.

One of the best aspects of these

developments has been the recent reappearance of seasonal beers. Special beers for Christmas—and indeed each season of the year—were widespread during the early days of brewing, a phenomenon which has agricultural origins. Barley, harvested in July, ideally needs six to eight weeks' "dormancy" while it naturally continues to develop. It may then be malted and brewed in October ready for release in November as a Christmas ale.

Beers made with the new season's barley are therefore often designed to highlight maltiness as a characteristic. Full-bodied, rich beers, sometimes high in alcohol, are wonderfully warming in cold weather. The nutty, port-

like, Christmas spiced ale that I recently savoured at Clerkenwell's Jerusalem Tavern (55, Britton Street), a district famous for brewing in centuries past, certainly brought a glow to my cheeks.

The tavern's house Christmas Ale, at a hefty 6.5 per cent alcohol (twice the strength of an everyday beer), achieves its winey flavours with the help of unusual ingredients apple and cinnamon. For the rest of winter, the tavern has a chocolatey-tasting strong ale; in summer there is an elderberry beer; and its 10 other specialities include a Honey Porter and an India Pale Ale.

The tavern's beers are not produced on site, but come from St Peter's Brewery, one of the new generation of stylish micro-breweries, which operates in Suffolk's St Peter's Hall, near Bungay. This 13th-century manor house has its own restaurant, plus a nearby pub and country hotel.

Established in 1996 by marketing guru John Murphy, St Peter's is truly micro: producing about 5,000 barrels a year, while old-established local and regional breweries make ten or a hundred times as much, and nationals count theirs in millions. Although most of the St Peter's range of beers are available on draught, maturing in the cellar of the pub,



Opposite, The Old Bank of England, Fleet Street, a Fuller's pub which will serve the brewery's Old Winter Ale for Christmas.

Top, the St Peter's Brewery Ale in eye-catching replicas of an 18th-century gin bottle.

Top right, brewing coppers in which wort (malted barley and water) is mixed with hops before being moved to fermentation tanks.

GOOD CHEERS

they are also sold in the bottle. With an eye to shelf-visibility, Murphy markets his beers in a bottle copied from an 18th-century gin bottle made for an inn near Philadelphia. "My experience is in branding, not brewing," concedes Murphy, "but we have been fanatical about product quality and we've developed an innovative range of beers. New micro-breweries are opening in the UK almost weekly, most producing excellent products and carving out a niche for themselves—but gaining distribution is tough."

Next to St Peter's Hall stretch fields of barley, appropriately for this, England's barley-malting heartland. A process of steeping, germination and kilning, malting renders the barley soluble. It takes place in buildings whose characteristic shape has become a distinctive feature of East Anglia's landscape. That today many have been put to other uses—famously The Maltings at Snape are now home to the Aldeburgh music festival—is illustrative of the recent vicissitudes which the industry has experienced. East Anglia has many famous old-established breweries, such as Ridley's (originally a grain mill), near Chelmsford; Greene King (in whose cellars monks were hidden during the Dissolution); and Adnams (also a famous wine merchant),



Taking a yeast sample to check the fermentation process in the brewhouse at St Peter's, Suffolk.

at Southwold; as well as new micros such as Nethergate, in Clare; and the award-winning Woodforde's, in Norwich.

Brewing, however, began much farther east: its history goes back at least to the

Sumerian civilisations, where beer was an offering to high priestesses. These early brewers flavoured their barley and wheat brews with honey and dates. In the centuries since, cherries, juniper berries, ash leaves and alder twigs have all played a role. The ancient Jews may have been the first to employ the hop—which can be minty, resinous, piney or reminiscent of citrus zest.

Benedictine monks from Flanders are reputed to have brought hopped beer across the Channel during the 15th and 16th centuries. The most prized hops in Britain are still grown near this coast, in a 10-mile stretch of Kent countryside between Canterbury and Faversham. The oldest brewing company in England, Shepherd Neame, established in 1698, still operates here.

Sailing barges once took barley malt from East Anglia and hops from Kent round the coast and up the Thames to London. On the river at Wandsworth, the famous beer-maker Young's (established in 1831) claims that its site has accommodated a brewery since 1581. A couple of miles upriver at Chiswick, Fuller's has been brewing since the late 1600s.

London is fortunate that both of these two world-class local breweries continue to thrive. Plus they are producing new and more varied ales.

Fuller's consistently wins awards for its beers. Among recent specialities a big, rounded, coffeeish London Porter is an especially welcome addition. At Young's a live ram is the mascot: geese guard the brewery; and there are two dozen dray-horses...all in an inner London neighbourhood. Young's Winter Warmer is dark, luscious, fruity, but surprisingly dry; its Export Special London Ale has recently lost some of its aroma but is still a robustly hoppy beer. Old Nick is a classic dark barley wine, with some liqueurish fruitiness. While the creamy Double Chocolate Stout meets the promise of its name, in both aroma and palate.

Among the comparative newcomers to the London scene—part of the renewed interest in

CAPITAL CHRISTMAS ALES

The Beer Shop and Pitfield Brewery

A tiny premises with the best selection of winter and Christmas brews from London and around the world. Pitfield's own adjoining micro-brewery will also be making a malty Christmas special.
14 Pitfield St (nr Old St Underground station), London N1, tel: 0171-739 3701.

Freedom The only lager specialist among Britain's new small breweries has a dark, rich, fruit beer called Cherry Christmas. Sample it opposite the brewery at London's best speciality-beer pub: The White Horse, 1-3 Parson's Green, Fulham, London SW6, tel: 0171-736 2115.

Fuller's This brewery's draught Old Winter Ale is soothing, malty, nutty, and vanilla-like. Try it at The Star Tavern, 6 Belgrave Mews West, London SW1, tel: 0171-235 3019. Each winter Fuller's also has a dated Vintage Ale, with a secondary fermentation in the bottle. It is hugely complex, with roasty aromas and almost gin-like flavours. Available from Fuller's own shops.

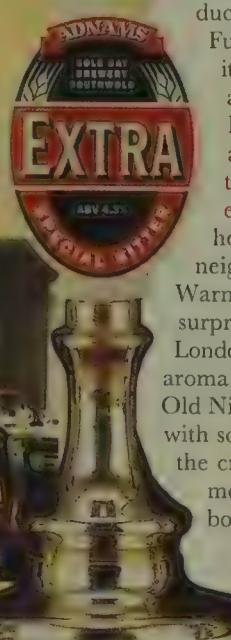
Mash (below) the most fashionable, and American-accented, of London's brewpub-restaurants offers for winter a malty Scotch Ale, spiced with cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and orange peel. 19-21 Great Portland St, London W1, tel: 0171-637 5555. Reservation advisable.

O'Hanlon's run by Kerryman John O'Hanlon, a former Firkin publican, is a tiny Victorian pub, decorated with theatre posters. John has his own brewery, in Vauxhall, making some hearty ales and stouts for his own pub and others. Look for a darkish Christmas brew spiced with ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and citrus peels. 8 Tysoe St, Clerkenwell, London EC1, tel: 0171-837 4112.

Soho Brewing Company

Young German brewer Albrecht von Wallmoden has for Christmas a Bock-strength (6.0-plus) Wheat Beer. Expect the peachy, toffeish flavours of a classic Bavarian Weizenbock. This German-American brewpub is at 41 Earlham St, Covent Garden, London WC2, tel: 0171-240 0606.

Young's The fruity, Winter Warmer is a classic dark ale. Try it at The Guinea, 30 Bruton Place, London, W1, tel: 0171-409 1728 (closed Sat lunchtime; all day Sun). Another classic Young's pub is The Lamb, 94 Lamb's Conduit St, Bloomsbury, London WC1, tel: 0171-405 0713.





Above, Albrecht von Wallmoden has produced a strong Bock-style Wheat Beer for Christmas at his brewpub, the Soho Brewing Company, in central London.

serious beer drinking in the 1970s—is David Bruce, who worked as a brewer in several established companies before setting up his own concern since, as he puts it “I didn’t want to finish up behind a mahogany desk”. Having acquired a derelict pub just south of the river in Borough High Street, in the old hop-trading area, he renamed it the Goose and Firkin (the latter word refers to a barrel size, as well as offering a double-entendre), and installed a small brewery. The Goose has

gone, but there are now about 70 Firkin pubs nationwide, some 50 with breweries. Bruce sold the chain, and has in recent years become a shareholder in various American brewpub and micro-brewery groups.

He describes another pioneer, Peter Austin, as “a proper brewer, the kind who wore Wellington boots and hefted sacks of malt”. One of the characters of the industry, Austin retired from a brewery in Yorkshire,

intending to pursue his hobby of sailing. Instead, in 1978, he established a micro-brewery in the New Forest. Austin and his successor, Alan Pugsley, have since, as consultants, helped establish about 120 brewpubs or micros all over the world, from the USA, to Africa, to Siberia.

And so Britain’s beer boom has become a worldwide movement, at a time when the biggest brewers are turning their national brands (Heineken, Carlsberg, Bass, Budweiser, Miller, Foster’s) into global names. This is no coincidence. As the multinationals’ beers become ever blander, seeking a common denominator of taste (or lack of it), the brewpubs and micros serve the disenchanted drinker who wants to be able to recognise the malt and hops in his or her beer.

By supporting this taste for strong, malty beer, CAMRA, the brewpubs and the micros are preserving a long tradition. Our pre-Christian forebears comforted themselves in the darkest days of the year with such brews. The idea of alcohol as a reinforcement persisted in the Anglo-Saxon wassail, a bout of toasting to ensure health and harmony. So, in keeping with ancient custom I raise my glass of hearty St Peter’s Ale to peace in 1999.

□ Michael Jackson’s latest book *Beer* (Dorling Kindersley) is out this Christmas. His other titles include *The Malt Whisky Companion*.

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Thursday-Monday

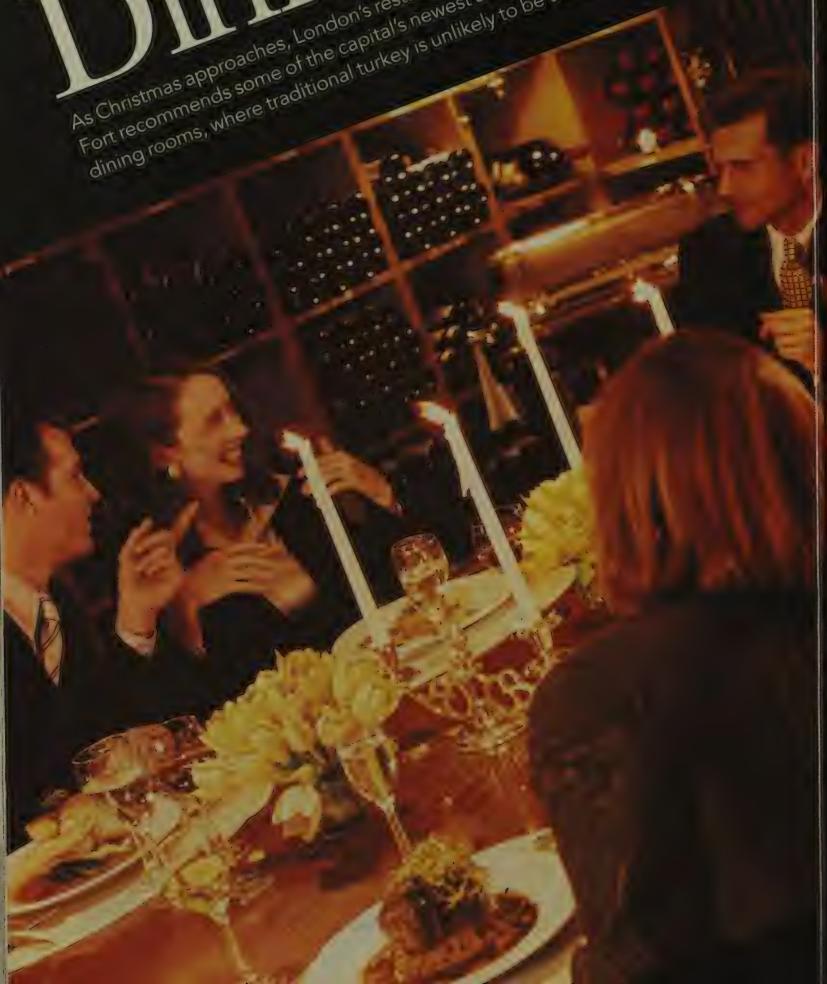
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Dinner

As Christmas approaches, London's restaurants go into overdrive. Matthew Fort recommends some of the capital's newest and most innovative dining rooms, where traditional turkey is unlikely to be the dish of the day.



Christmas comes but once a year: festive lunches are rather more plentiful. We are all familiar with the scene. You've savoured several glasses of suitably extravagant wine. You've settled into the brandy and cigars. Life is looking rosy from where you're sitting, and you have no inclination whatsoever to move. It's only when the waiter starts hovering with grim determination that you realise it is time to find somewhere for a short nap—before starting all over again.

Restaurants are invariably stretched to breaking point at Christmas—and one of their major problems is persuading lunchtime revellers to leave the premises in time for the influx of the dinner crowd. Most restaurateurs and chefs look on Christmas in much the same way as the rest of us, with that mixture of anticipation and dread. "I wish it was all over quickly," says television superchef and proprietor of both Woz and Wiz, Antony Worrall Thompson. "People behave differently over Christmas. They drink more, stay longer and shout more loudly."

Chris Bodker, proprietor of the chic, sleek and fashionable Circus and Avenue, takes a slightly more detached view. "I think restaurants are similar to other retail operations in that they follow the classic pattern of half the year's profits coming in the last quarter of the year." All restaurants acknowledge the importance of Christmas in terms of their turnover. Antony Worrall Thompson estimates that the business at Woz goes up by 50 per cent between the end of November and Christmas Day, because lunches suddenly become packed out. He also points out that people will spend up to 30 per cent more on drink, either in quantity or quality. The difference, "If we could sell the same quantities of port during the remaining 11 months, Portugal would double its exports," says Le Gavroche's maître d', Silvano Giraldin.

The upsurge in custom precipitates the complex balancing act that faces all restaurants with substantial and loyal followings: namely, squaring the demands of the profitable Yuletide throngs with the expectations of regulars who support the restaurant throughout the rest of the year. There are few things more irritating in life than being told all the tables are fully booked in

the watering hole where you have been eating for the last 10 years, thanks to the invasion of the once-a-year harroopers.

Still, as Rowley Leigh, chef/proprietor at Kensington Place, says, Christmas is an opportunity to showcase a restaurant's qualities to first-time visitors, and he puts his best foot forward in the hope that they will return when the tables are less crowded. In an attempt to control the level of exuberance, increasing numbers of restaurants limit the size of groups; at Circus and Avenue, for instance, the maximum is 10. There is an element of commercial pragmatism about this: the individual spend declines in direct proportion to the size of the party.

Generally, however, restaurants are one of the very few sectors of British industry in which workers actually welcome higher levels of activity. Both kitchen and front-of-house staff thrive on being pushed. In fact, it is very difficult to motivate staff in a restaurant that isn't busy. The real rush starts in the second week in November and builds from there. This is when special menus start to appear—although rarely in London do they reflect the Yuletide spirit. The reluctance of chefs to go down the turkey-with-all-the-trimmings route is matched only by the enthusiasm of the eating public for doing so.

Marion Scrutton, maître d' at both Avenue and Circus is adamant that customers do not come to either establishment for traditional fare, and there will be no surrender. The menus at both these restaurants will be seasonal, but not *Seasonal*. Silvano Giraldin is a little more circumspect: "At Le Gavroche we will include turkey for the last two weeks before Christmas Day, and maybe something traditionally French such as *boudin blanc*. We'll serve mince pies with the *petits fours*. Rowley Leigh, on the other hand, embraces Christmas with resigned good humour, and promises "turkey in the Lombard style".

With London's seemingly infinite range of restaurants, there should be something for every taste, no matter how exotic. Taking a brief excursion around some of the best



Woz

"People behave differently over Christmas. They drink more, stay longer and shout more loudly."

Antony Worrall Thompson

Partying



Circus, top, where the menu will be seasonal rather than Seasonal. Above, Philip Britten at the classy Capital Hotel; 18th-century elegance at Lindsay House, below right.

ethnic restaurants, there's Spanish at Gaudi, North African at Moro, South Indian at Malabar Junction, North Indian at Tamarind, Polish at Patio, Turkish at Istanbul Iskembegisi, Pacific Rim at The Sugar Club, Franco-Thai at Vong, Irish at O'Conor Don-Ard-Ri and Mauritian at Jason's to name but a few. And soon there'll be several more, such is the current appetite for opening new restaurants.

Whether you crave a leg of turkey or something more *recherché*, what are your chances of getting into the restaurant of your choice? Even by August, they were starting to wear thin. Corporate party planners and those once-a-year celebrants were already mobilising their forces. And if you want to go somewhere special next year, you should start booking now. If you can't, don't take it to heart; you're in good company. You certainly won't be the first person at Christmas to find that there's no room at the inn.

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE: DANNY LIMES

For Serious Celebrating

Lindsay House, 21 Romilly Street, W1.
Tel: 0171-439 0450

Some of the most inventive, satisfying and generally all-round amazing food from Richard Corrigan. Menus change weekly, so it is difficult to predict Christmas fare at this stage. A place of immense, if idiosyncratic, charm, it preserves much of the elegance of the 18th-century town house overlaid with good taste and a light coating of Irish vim. Intelligent wine list. Small, so book early to have any chance. Or, more sensibly, save your celebrations until January when we all need them so much more. £35-40*

La Tante Claire, The Berkeley Hotel, Wilton Place, SW1. Tel: 0171-803 2003

Not open at the time of writing, so it may seem rather prescient, not to say cheeky, to be recommending it. But it should be in full swing by the beginning of November, and chef Pierre Koffman built up such a track record—three Michelin stars, endless awards of every kind, hero-worship by his peer group—when La Tante Claire was in Royal Hospital Road that this new venture inside the Berkeley Hotel seems a very safe bet. Highly personal classic French cooking of the most superior order with its roots in rural Gascony. Prices and wine list to match, I imagine. Estimate £30-75*

Restaurant Gordon Ramsay, 68-69 Royal Hospital Road, SW3. Tel: 0171-352 4441

By the same token, Gordon Ramsay has taken over Monsieur Koffman's old billet in Chelsea, carrying on where he left off when Aubergine was based in Fulham. Powerhouse cooking in the modern French style, featuring brilliantly constructed and executed dishes and sauces of unparalleled depth and finish. Two Michelin stars, and clearly shooting for his third, which he'll certainly achieve on this form. You can tell the quality of the place at a glance—the décor breathes sophistication and class.

Cosetting service also in the French mode. Senior wine list and prices. £25-65*

Moro, 34-36 Exmouth Market, EC1.

Tel: 0171-833 8336

Stylish newcomer helping to turn Clerkenwell into the capital's snappiest eating centre (Quality Chop House, The Eagle, Stephen Bull Bistro, St John's, Novelli EC1 are all within easy walking distance). Easy, relaxed, bustling place, full of confident, relaxed eaters. The Spanish/North African food hums with flavour—it's robust, clever and seriously satisfying and, you feel, healthy with it. The value of proper puddings is never in doubt here. It has also helped start putting sherry back where it belongs, at the top of the tippling list. The luscious and fruity Pedro Ximenez is particularly recommended as a post-prandial snifter. £25-30*

Nobu, Metropolitan Hotel, Old Park Lane, W1. Tel: 0171-447 4747

The place for an alternative Christmas experience—ultra-smart, ultra-chic for the ultra-sleek in the Metropolitan Hotel. Even if you're not designed like a Ferrari, you should find the largely fish-based, Japanese-inspired food a proper contrast to the occidental *grande boufferie*. Exquisite presentation and flavours, particularly the sauces, are much easier on the hips and health. Sensible wines, or an opportunity to go in for a little light sake-tasting. Uniformed service in keeping with the place, if rather chattier. £35-50*

Capital Hotel Restaurant, 22-24 Basil Street, SW3. Tel: 0171-589 5171

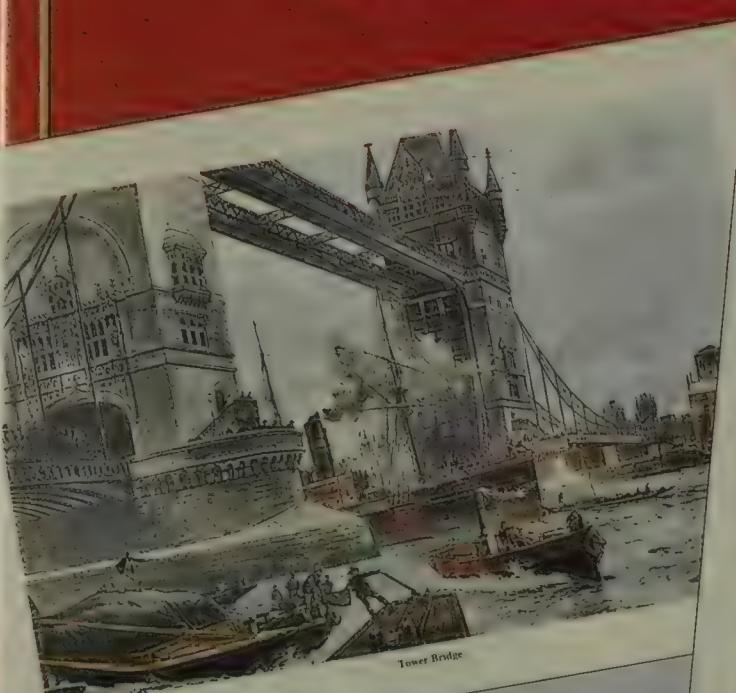
Philip Britten is one of the most consistently inventive chefs in the country. For 10 years he has been flying the flag for serious cooking at the Capital Hotel, and his creative powers show no signs of dimming. His touch is subtle, sophisticated, delicate and sure, so that flavours creep up on you rather than blasting the taste buds. He has been experimenting with Indian spicing recently, woven discreetly into dishes which articulate his classic French background. The dining room has the bloom of relaxed class and comfort. Mega wine list. £23-60*

*Prices per head, without wine.

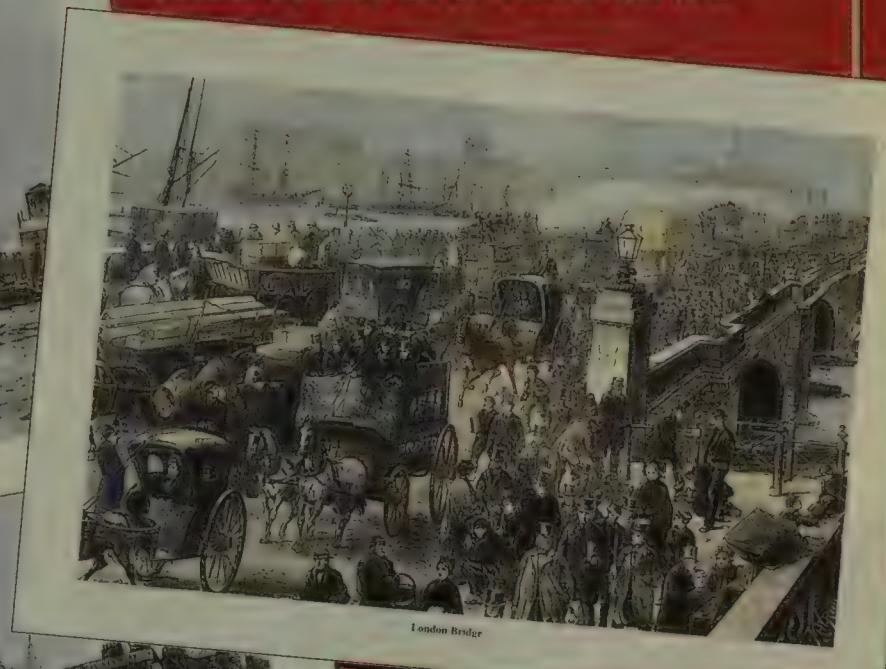


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DANCE

The new Sadler's Wells Theatre offers an exciting programme of innovative dance including the first UK visit of William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt. The Royal Ballet offers the chance to see Darcey Bussell & Viviana Durante dancing in both *Cinderella* & *Romeo & Juliet*, & to catch the French ballerina Sylvie Guillem as Juliet. English National Ballet presents two traditional favourites at the London Coliseum, Birmingham Royal Ballet has a visit to London's Lyceum Theatre with its staging of *The Nutcracker*.

Ballett Frankfurt. First UK visit of William Forsythe's contemporary ballet company with a triple bill that comprises three pieces he has created during the last decade: *Hypothetical Steam 2*, *Energy in the Figure & Caged*, the last set to music by Gavin Bryars. Nov 24-25, Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (0171-863 8000).

Birmingham Royal Ballet. Peter Wright's production of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*, based on a story by ETA Hoffmann, with choreography by Ivanov, Wright & Redmon. Dec 22-29, Lyceum, Wellington St, WC2 (0870 0053441).

La Cuadra de Sevilla. Carmen, an Andalusian retelling of the original legend that inspired Merle. The spectacular production by Salvador Távora features flamenco singers, dancers & guitarists, plus a 30-strong baile & drum band. Carmen is



The Nutcracker:
Wolfgang Stollweitzer
and Leticia Müller,
left, in Birmingham
and London.
Romeo & Juliet:
Darcey Bussell for the
Royal Ballet, below.



★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Royal Ballet

Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella*, choreographed to Prokofiev's music in colourful sets and costumes designed by David Walker, with Darcey Bussell & Viviana Durante dancing the lead. Dec 22, 23 (m/e), 26 (m/e).

La Fille mal gardée, Nalton's family favourite, danced to music by Herold. Dec 29, 30 (m/e), 31 (m), Jan 1, 2 (m/e), 4 (m/e), 5-9 (m/e). Kenneth MacMillan's *Sankai Juku*, Japan's leading

played by Lalo Tejada, who dances the torero sequence with a white stallion schooled in the dressage of the Spanish Riding School. Nov 18-21, Sadler's Wells.

English National Ballet. Traditional fare for the company's Christmas season: *The Nutcracker* in Derek Deane's spectacular production of the Tchaikovsky favourite, which combines both modern and classical. Dec 19-21 & Jan 9, matinees Dec 19-20 & Jan 9, matinees Jan 11-15, 16 (m/e), London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-672 6300).

Rambert Dance Company. Revival of *Cruel Garden*, an evocation of the life & times of Federico Garcia

Lorca that was created 20 years ago by Lindsay Kemp & Christopher Bruce. Nov 10-14, Sadler's Wells.

Butoh company presents *Shijima*, an initiation into a world of secret ritual performed by five male dancers with shaven heads & their bodies painted white. Jan 19-22, Sadler's Wells.

Stomp. One of the UK's most successful arts exports returns home for a six-week London run. A cast of eight performers hammers out pulsating rhythms using boots, bins, brushes, bars, and every inch



their metal stage set. Nov 18-Dec 27, *The Roundhouse*, Chalk Farm Rd, NW1 (0171-420 0171).

OUT OF TOWN
Birmingham Royal Ballet. *The Nutcracker*, with choreography by Ivanov, Wright & Redmon. Dec 4-16, Hippodrome, Birmingham (0151-589 3000).

English National Ballet. *Cinderella*, Nov 18-21, Palace, Manchester (0161-242 2502). *The Nutcracker*, Dec 1-3, Hippodrome, Bristol (0117-923 9444).

Northern Ballet Theatre. The company tours four ballets devised by its artistic director, Christopher Gable. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, Nov 17-21, Derngate, Northampton (01604 624911). *Giselle*, Nov 24-28, Grand Theatre, Blackpool (01253 290190); Jan 36-30, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh (0131-229 6000). *Cinderella*, Dec 1-5, Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113-222 6222). *A Christmas Carol*, Dec 9-12, New Theatre, Hull (01482 226655). **MARGARET DAVIES**

Cinderella: Michael Corder's ethereal production of Prokofiev's most beloved story, at the Coliseum.

Stomp: The Roundhouse plays host to this energetic cast of eight.



THEATRE

Children can walk in the air with *Peter Pan*, while adults can venture into the magical forests of *Sondheim's Into the Woods*. The RSC predicts some stormy weather in *The Tempest* & dark forebodings in *Richard III*, but New Year has a much sunnier outlook with *Oklahoma!*

Addresses & telephone numbers are given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

CHILDREN'S & CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Alegria: The fantastic, multi-national troupe, Cirque du Soleil, return to the Royal Albert Hall in January, right.

Annie: Charlene Bartomcith, below, as the eponymous orphan warms the cockles of every family's heart in this tale of the triumph of good over evil.

C

Arabian Nights: Colourful characters in exotic adventures include Ali Baba & Sinbad. Now 16-Jan 23. *Young Vic*, *The Cat, SE1* (0171-929 6363).

Annie: Family musical about the little orphan with the big heart. With Lesley Joseph. *Victoria Palace, Victoria St, SW1* (0171-834 3137).

Arabian Nights: Colourful characters in exotic adventures include Ali Baba & Sinbad. Now 16-Jan 23. *Young Vic*, *The Cat, SE1* (0171-929 6363).

Beauty & the Beast: Entertaining big-budget adaptation of the tuneful Disney cartoon. *Dominion, Tottenham Court Rd, W1* (0171-656 1888).

Charlotte's Web: A musical adaptation of E B White's novel about a resourceful spider. Now 19-Feb 6. *Palais Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19* (0181-543 4888).

Cinderella: Ever-inventive. Improbable! Theatre stages Angela Carter's retelling of the tale. Nov 27-Jan 9. *Lyric Hammersmith, King St, W6* (0181-741 2311).

Cinderella: With Bradley Walsh as Buttons & Brian Eklund as the Fairy Godmother. Dec 18-Jan 31. *Wimbledon Theatre, 93 The Broadway, SW19* (0181-540 0362).

Cinderella: A riotous new version by David Cregan & Brian Protheroe. Dec 1-Jan 23. *Theatre Royal, Stratford East, Gerty Raffles Sq,*

Lohan's Apollo: Hammermith, W6 (0171-544 4444).



E15 (0181-534 0310).

Dick Whittington: With Anita Dobson.

Paul Moriarty & Clive Rowe. Dec 10-Jan 10.

Hackney Empire: *Hackney Empire, 291 Mare St, EC2* (0181-968 2424).

Doctor Dolittle: Philip Schofield talks (& sings) to

the animals in this brisk spectacle. *Lohan's Apollo, Hammermith, W6* (0171-544 4444).

Energy: A musical. Energetic show inspired by the film & TV series about students at the New York School of Performing Arts. Until Jan 16. *Prince of Wales, Coventry St, W1* (0171-839 5972).

Hansel & Gretel: A clever

reworking of the dark tale. Nov 22-Jan 17. *Union Theatre, Great Newport St, WC2* (0171-836 5334).

Haroun & the Sea of Stories: An adaptation of Salman Rushdie's magical 1990 novel about the adventures of a storyteller's son. *Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

Jack & the Beanstalk: With Toyah Willcox, Mark Curry, Robert Duncan & Vicki Michelle. Dec 18-Jan 30. *Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey* (0181-940 0400).

Jack & the Beanstalk: With Robert Firth, Robert Powell & Tim Brooke-Taylor. Dec 11-Jan 3. *Hennebique, Croydon, Surrey* (0181-452 3000).

Peter Pan: A revival of last year's well-received new version of J M Barrie's fantasy. With Michael Bryant as the storyteller. Dec 10 to mid-Feb. *Oliver, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

Peter Pan: With Kirsten O'Brien & Brian Blessed as Captain Hook. Dec 24-Jan 24. *Ashton, Croydon, Surrey* (0181-689 9211).

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Haroun & the Sea of Stories: Magical adventures for children at the Cottesloe, left.

Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs

the animals in this brisk spectacle. *Lohan's Apollo, Hammermith, W6* (0171-544 4444).

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betrayal by charting an adulterous affair in reverse, from the final disenchantment between a woman & her husband's best friend to their initial rapture. Imogen Stubbs, Douglas Hodge & Anthony Calf play the love triangle in this 20th-anniversary revival directed by Trevor Nunn. Opens Nov 24. *Lyttelton, National Theatre*.

Filumena. Any staging of Eduardo de Filippo's 1946 Neapolitan comedy, which shifts from farce to social commentary & is sprinkled with some tricky monologues, ideally needs an experienced cast. Peter Hall's production fortunately has skilled players like Judi Dench, who has the title role of the long-term mistress of a wealthy businessman (Michael Pennington) whom she's tricked into marriage. Runs in repertory with *Kafka's Dick*. *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1 (0171-369 1734)*.

Into the Woods. Stephen Sondheim & James Lapine's witty 1987 musical is a kind of adult pantomime & a morality game of consequences. It cleverly intermingles such fairy-tale figures as Cinderella, Rapunzel & Little Red Riding in a new tale about a childless couple forced on a quest in an enchanted forest. As the story progresses, everyone is compelled to answer for their actions. John Crowley directs a strong ensemble that includes Sophie Thompson, Sheila Reid & Jenna Russell. Until Feb 13. *Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2 (0171-369 1732)*.

The Invention of Love. John Wood reprises his acclaimed performance as acerbic scholar & lyric poet A E Housman for the West End transfer of Richard Eyre's National Theatre production. Tom

Stoppard's dream-like play muses on academics, aesthetics & male friendship as the dead poet recalls his life from Hades. It makes for a witty & stimulating if slightly passionless evening. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800)*.

Kafka's Dick. Alan Bennett's 1986 intellectual comedy brings self-loathing writer Franz Kafka & his biographer Max Brod back from the dead & into the modern-day suburban home of a Kafka-obsessed insurance man & his frustrated wife. Bennett's farcical look at literary myth & fame is both very funny & informative. The cast includes John Gordon Sinclair, Julia McKenzie & Eric Sykes. Runs in repertory with *Filumena*. *Piccadilly Theatre*.

Jackie. Describing itself as a



Oklahoma!: Get into the swing at the Lyceum with Trevor Nunn's reworking of the original Broadway show. **The Tempest:** David Calder is passionate and volatile as Prospero in Adrian Noble's production.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Oklahoma! If you couldn't get a ticket earlier this year for Trevor Nunn's dynamic reworking of the 1943 Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, now's your chance. The original Broadway show was one of the first to fuse story, song & dance, & this production, with thrilling new choreography, moves between these elements with consummate ease. From the rousing opening of "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" to the climactic title song, this is an absolute joy. Opens Jan 20. *Lyceum, Catherine St, WC2 (0171-416 6099)*.

"satirical comedy", Gip Hoppe's Broadway show follows the life of Jackie Bouvier Kennedy Onassis from horse-besotted youth & debutante, then presidential accessory & grieving widow, &

finally consort to a millionaire. British actress Lysette Anthony, based in Los Angeles, makes her theatrical debut in the title role, while a cast of 10 double up as various characters as well as some of the props & scenery. *Queen's, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5040)*.

Little Malcolm & His Struggle Against the Eunuchs.

Busy film actor Ewan McGregor, star of *Trainspotting* & next year's new *Star Wars* movie, makes a rare foray on stage in David Halliwell's seldom seen 1966 satire in which an art student dreams of world revolution. Actor Denis Lawson (McGregor's uncle) directs. Nov 18-Dec 21. *Hampstead*

Theatre, Avenue Rd, NW3 (0171-722 9301).

Love Upon The Throne. The National Theatre of Brent's two-man retelling of Charles & Diana's royal romance is funny, touching, & a wonderful exercise in deliberately bad acting. Patrick Barlow's bossy organiser of the play within the play, Desmond Olivier Dingle, is a superb comic creation, as is John Ramm's dogsbody of a fellow player. Amusing and curiously moving. *Comedy Theatre, Panton St, SW1 (0171-369 1731)*.

Measure for Measure. In this Royal Shakespeare Company transfer from Stratford, director Michael Boyd sees this troubling play as not only a drama about mercy & justice but also how moral crusades can turn into tyranny. His provocative & austere approach highlights the sense of moral decay as the disguised Duke of Venice observes how power corrupts his ruling deputy. In the wake of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, this drama of private desire & public office seems all the more pertinent. Jan 14-Feb 11. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican, EC2 (0171-638 8891)*.

Richard III. Previous incarnations of the crookback king for the RSC have included Antony Sher's scuttling spider & Simon Russell Beale's satanic tyrant. Now Robert Lindsay stamps his own mark on the role in Shakespeare's bloody melodrama of violence & villainy. Elijah Moshinsky directs this touring production. Opens Jan 18. *Savoy Theatre, Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888)*.

The Tempest. Although David Calder is impressive as a passionate & volatile Prospero, the real star of this RSC transfer from Stratford is Anthony Ward's dazzling design which conjures up a stunning opening storm & a truly magical island. There



is also strong comedic support from Barry Stanton's Stephano & Adrian Schiller's Trinculo & an effectively brooding presence in the shape of Robert Glenister's mud-caked Caliban. Dec 17-Feb 13. *Barbican Theatre*.

West Side Story. David Habbie & Kate Knight-Adams play the ill-fated lovers in this celebrated musical update of the *Romeo & Juliet* tragedy, set in 1950s New York. As this touring revival proves, the show may be over 40 years old but the songs, including "Maria", "Tonight" & the irresistible "America", are as powerful as ever. *Prince Edward, Old Compton St, W1 (0171-447 5400)*.

RECOMMENDED LONG RUNNERS

Art, Wyndham's (0171-369 1736); *Blood Brothers*, Phoenix (0171-369 1733); *Buddy*, Strand (0171-930 8800); *Cats*, New London (0171-405 0072); *Grease*, Cambridge (0171-494 5080); *An Inspector Calls*, Garrick (0171-494 5085); *Les Misérables*, Palace (0171-434 0909); *Miss Saigon*, Theatre Royal, Drury Lane (0171-494 5000); *The Mousetrap*, St Martin's (0171-836 1443); *The Phantom of the Opera*, Her Majesty's (0171-494 5400); *Starlight Express*, Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6070); *The Woman in Black*, Fortune (0171-836 2238).

OUT OF TOWN

RSC season at Stratford: *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe* by C S Lewis, adapted by Adrian Mitchell, directed by Adrian Noble, Nov 24-Feb 27; *The Winter's Tale*, directed by Gregory Doran, Dec 10-Feb 26.

At the Swan: A Month in the Country by Turgenev, adapted by Brian Friel, directed by Michael Attenborough, Nov 25-Feb 20; *Troilus & Cressida*, directed by Michael Boyd, Dec 8-Feb 20. *Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick CV37 6BB (01789 295623)*.

IAN JOHNS

CINEMA

Meryl Streep presents another of her carefully researched accents as an Irish schoolteacher in *Dancing at Lughnasa* in which music plays an unexpectedly important part. In the Alain Resnais film *On Connait la Chanson*, popular songs are interwoven into the dramatic action. Time & spatial dimensions are tampered with in the Anglo-Spanish co-production *If Only*, & in the American *Pleasantville* in which modern teenagers enter the imaginary world of a 1950s television sitcom. *The Mask of Zorro* revives an old hero of the Saturday morning serials.



Antz. Brilliant digital animation propels this ingenious epic with a cast of millions, voiced by Woody Allen as a lowly worker ant who swaps places with his soldier friend (Sylvester Stallone) so that he can rescue a princess (Sharon Stone) from an arranged marriage to a megalomaniac general (Gene Hackman). Eric Darnell & Tim Johnson's insect fantasy is original & delightful. Opens Nov 6.

Bulworth. Warren Beatty, who directs & co-writes, plays a California senator on the brink of a nervous breakdown as he faces an election challenge. After embarking on a suicide bid by hiring a hitman to kill him he decides to tell the truth & take up cudgels for the black community. As political satire it has a considerable edge, & fine performances, including that of Halle Berry. Opens Nov 27.

Dancing at Lughnasa. Brian Friel's ensemble Irish play arrives on the screen, superbly directed on location by Pat O'Connor. In the mid-1930s five unmarried spinsters make the best of their impoverished lives in a remote village. They are joined by their brother (Michael Gambon) a priest returned from Africa with his

mental faculties impaired. The eldest of the women (Meryl Streep) loses her job as a schoolmistress, & the close-knit

The Negotiator:
An excellent police thriller, with Samuel L Jackson, left, in the frame for murder.

Rounders: Gangster John Malkovich, above, wants his pound of flesh in the poker-playing New York underworld. **Bulworth:** Warren Beatty and Halle Berry act up a storm in this political satire.

family is threatened. Opens Dec 4.

The Eel. The Japanese winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes last year, written & directed by Shohei Imamura, is an absorbing drama in which an ex-prisoner (Koji Yakusho), having served time for murdering his wife, begins anew as a barber in a small town & forms a partnership with another woman (Misa Shimizu). Opens Nov 20.

Fear & Loathing in Las Vegas. Terry Gilliam has made a brave attempt at filming the unfilmable 1971 account by Hunter S Thompson of a trip in both senses to the Nevada gambling mecca. Johnny Depp plays his alter ego, a journalist hooked on drugs & booze who cruises into town in a red Chevy with his attorney & colleague (Benicio Del Toro). Gilliam's visual imagination is powerful, but the dated material almost defeats him. Opens Nov 13.

If Only. Douglas Henshall, as a young, out-of-work, Scottish actor in London, messes up his relationship with his girlfriend (Lena Headey) but after a miraculous encounter with two strange Spanish dustmen backtracks six months, giving him a chance to organise things differently. The first-time director of this British comedy is Maria Ripoli. Opens Nov 27.

The Mask of Zorro. The old swashbuckler revisited gets better as it goes along. The first Zorro (Anthony Hopkins), a Californian landowner in the Spanish-rule era of the 1820s, doubles up at night as a masked avenger. He comes out of retirement to teach swordplay to Antonio Banderas, who becomes Zorro 2, & woos Hopkins's fiery daughter,



Snake Eyes: Thrills galore as corrupt cop Nicolas Cage uncovers a conspiracy. **Out of Sight:** George Clooney, below, is the escaped convict in this labyrinthine tale by Elmore Leonard.

Catherine Zeta Jones. Martin Campbell's film is strong on adventure, but occasionally too gruesome for the very young. Opens Dec 11.

The Negotiator. Samuel L Jackson plays an accomplished police negotiator in Chicago who finds himself framed for murder. Using his experience he takes hostages. Kevin Spacey, another police negotiator, has the task of dealing with the situation, resulting in a tense face-off. The interplay of the two excellent actors makes F Gary Gray's film worth seeing. Opens Nov 13.

On Connait La Chanson. Alain Resnais' new film is a romantic merry-go-round, in which the characters frequently break into popular songs in the Dennis Potter manner. Sabine Azema is seeking a new apartment, & her younger sister (Agnes Jaoui) falls for the estate agent (Lambert Wilson) after a misunderstanding with his employee (Andre Dusollier) who is in love with her. Pierre Arditi, Jean-Pierre Bacri & Jane Birkin make up the cast of this innovative work. Opens Dec 4.

Out of Sight. This highly-charged thriller in which a beautiful but tough Federal marshal (Jennifer Lopez) falls in love with her prey, an escaped, convicted bank robber (George Clooney) is given a roller-coaster treatment by its director Steven Soderbergh. The plot twists are

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Pleasantville In Gary Ross's fantasy fable teenage twin brother & sister Tobey Maguire & Reese Witherspoon are transported from the late 1990s to the fictitious environment of a 1950s black-and-white television sitcom where sex is unheard of & even the bathrooms are bereft of WCs. Their intrusion makes an impact. William H Macy & Joan Allen are affecting as the sitcom mom & dad, with the latter suddenly becoming ignited by the ice-cream parlour owner (Jeff Daniels). The special effects, with colour slowly intruding into a monochromatic world, are extraordinary. Opens Dec 18.

starts with an amazing 12-minute Steadicam sequence, building to a political assassination in a sports arena, without a single cut. After such virtuosity the rest of the film appears anti-climactic. Opens Nov 6. **Rush Hour** The ebullient Hong Kong superstar Jackie Chan shifts his ground to Hollywood in a wild adventure, directed by Brett Ratner. He & the black comedian Chris Tucker play cops trying to crack a kidnapping case involving the young daughter of a Chinese diplomat. Chan's stunts are less spectacular than usual, but he holds his own in cross-talk. Tom Wilkinson turns up as a villain. Opens Dec 4.

GEORGE PERRY

labyrinthine in this satisfying adaptation of an Elmore Leonard story. Opens Nov 27.

Rounders. In a throwback to 1960s films like *The Hustler* & *The Cincinnati Kid*, the New York high-stakes, poker-playing underground becomes the subject of John Dahl's film, with Matt Damon as an habitué who tries to give it up to go to law school. When his best friend (Edward Norton) is released from prison he is obliged to help him square his debts with a Russian gangster (John Malkovich). Opens Nov 27.

Snake Eyes. Brian De Palma's thriller about a corrupt Atlantic City cop (Nicolas Cage) stumbling on a naval conspiracy led by Gary Sinise

OPERA

There is a last chance to see a Royal Opera performance before its year-long closure, during which it hopes to solve its many management problems. The company's season at Sadler's Wells offers operas by Smetana & Rimsky-Korsakov that it has not performed for many years. The highlight of English National Opera's autumn season is a new production of *Boris Godunov* in Mussorgsky's original version. Glyndebourne continues its annual tour with Jonathan Dove's fascinating new opera, *Flight*. English Touring Opera performs Donizetti's rarely staged comedy *The Daughter of the Regiment*.

ENGLISH FESTIVAL OPERA

Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

Madam Butterfly. Irene Cerboncini sings the title role, with Antoni Garfield Henry & David Newman alternating as Pinkerton, in a production by Fenton Gray, conducted by Simon Gray, sung in Italian. Dec 26-30, Jan 1.

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300).

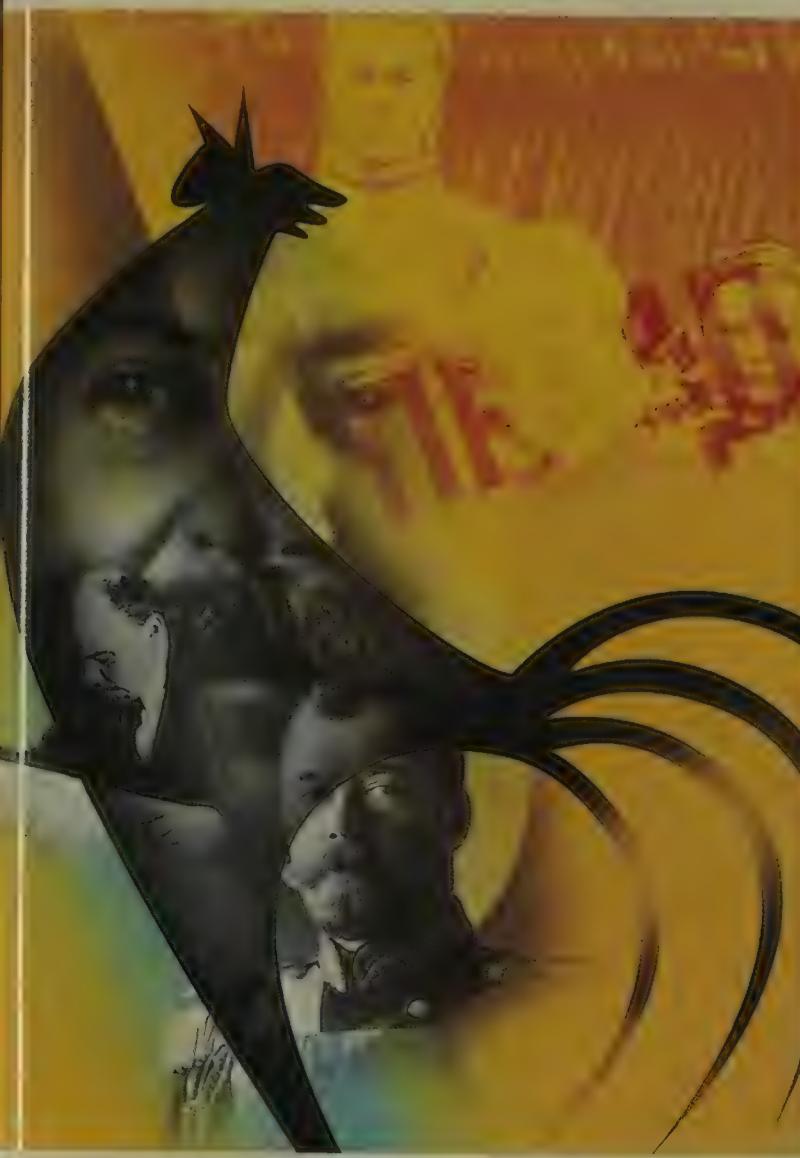
Madam Butterfly. Cheryl Barker gives a profoundly affecting performance of the ill-used geisha in Puccini's tragedy, with James Cornelison as the brash Lieutenant Pinkerton, whose betrayal leads to her death, in Graham Vick's stark staging. Nov 13, 17, 19, 21, 23.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Boris Godunov. John Tomlinson sings the usurping tsar in Francesca Zambello's new staging of the seven-scene version of Mussorgsky's epic opera, Paul Daniel conducts the composer's original orchestration. Nov 11, 14, 18, 20, 24, 27, Dec 2, 4, 8, 11.

The Barber of Seville.

Christopher Maltman & Riccardo Simonetti share the title role, with Lesley Garrett/ Eirian James as Rosina, Toby Spence as Count Almaviva, in Jonathan Miller's *commedia dell'arte* staging; Mark Shanahan conducts. Nov 25, 28, Dec 1, 3, 7, 10, Jan 19, 22, 26, 28, 30, Feb 4, 11.



ENGLISH TOURING OPERA

The Daughter of the Regiment. Kit Hesketh Harvey provides a new translation for Donizetti's comedy; Sarah Rhodes & Fiona MacAndrew share the title role, with Eugene Ginty as Tonio, Ian Spink directs.

Fidelio. Annica Andersson sings Leonore with Jeffrey Lloyd-Roberts as Florestan.

Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury (01227 787787), Nov 10-14. Theatre Royal, Bath (01225 448844), Nov 17-21. Anvil, Basingstoke (01256 844244), Nov 23,24. Sands Centre, Carlisle (01228 525222), Nov 27,28. Opera House, Buxton (01298 72190), Dec 1-5.

ROYAL OPERA

Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (0171-713 6000).

The Bartered Bride. Music director Bernard Haitink conducts & Francesca Zambello directs Smetana's story of Bohemian village life, sung in Czech, with Soile Isokoski/Zvetelina Vassileva as the heroine, Marenka, Jorma Silvasti/Christopher Ventris as Jenik, whom she loves, Ian Bostridge/Timothy Robinson as the stuttering Vasek, whom her father wants her to marry, & Franz

Hawلاتا/Kristinn Sigmundsson as Kecal, the wily marriage broker. Dec 10,12,14,15,17,19,21,23,31, Jan 1,5,8,12,14.

The Golden Cockerel. Rimsky-Korsakov's fairy-tale opera, based on a satire by Pushkin, is directed by Tim Hopkins & conducted by Gennadi Rozhdestvensky/Vladimir Jurowski. The cast includes Elena Kelessidi as the Queen of Shemakha, Gillian Webster/Anne Dawson as the Golden Cockerel, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt/Mikhail Agafonov as the Astrologer, Paata Burchuladze/Vladimir Matorin as King Dodon. Dec 22,29,30, Jan 2,4,6,7,9(m&e),11,13,15,16(m&e).

OUT OF TOWN

GLYNDEBOURNE TOURING OPERA *Glyndebourne, Lewes, E Sussex (01273 813813).*

Flight. Jonathan Dove's appealing new opera, set in an airport lounge, had a deservedly warm reception at its first performance. It perceptively explores the diverse reactions of a group of passengers when their flight is delayed & the score is tuneful & entertaining. David Parry is the expert conductor & the cast is uniformly strong.

The Golden Cockerel:
The Royal Opera take to
the huge new stage at Sadler's
Wells in late December.

Rodelinda. Not to be missed by those who love Handel's music, here conducted with irresistible fervour by Harry Bicket. Lisa Milne sings expressively as the moving heroine & faithful wife who thinks her husband is dead, while he, Bertarido is finely sung by the counter-tenor David Cordier. The villainous Grimoaldo is strongly portrayed by Paul Nilon.

Cosi fan tutte. Graham Vick's staging of the opera as a rehearsal gives the impression that he was devoid of inspiration; Louis Langrée conducts. The cast for the tour includes Althea-Maria Papoulias as Fiordiligi, Olivier Lalloquette as Guglielmo, Yves Saelens as Ferrando. *Theatre Royal, Norwich (01603 630000), Nov 10-14. Mayflower, Southampton (01703 711811), Nov 17-21. Palace, Manchester (0161-242 2503), Nov 24-28. Theatre Royal, Plymouth (01752 267222), Dec 1-5. Derngate, Northampton (01604 624811), Dec 8 & 10.*

OPERA NORTH

Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113-222 6222).

Carmen. Phyllida Lloyd directs a young cast for her new production: Ruby Philogene sings the title role, with Antoni Garfield Henry as Don José, Susannah Glanville as Micaëla, Mark Stone as

Escamillo. András Ligeti conducts. Dec 19,21, Jan 14,16,27,29.

The Thieving Magpie. A rare chance to hear Rossini's delightful comedy, in Martin Duncan's staging, sung by Mary Hegarty as Ninetta, Ann Taylor as Pippo, Jonathan Best as Fernando Villabella. *Jan 15,26,28,30. SCOTTISH OPERA Festival Theatre, Edinburgh (0131-529 6000).*

Tristan & Isolde. Jeffrey Lawton & Eva-Maria Bundschuh in Peter Watson's production; Richard Armstrong conducts. Nov 17,21.

The Magic Flute. Cast includes David Stephenson as Papageno, Wynne Evans as Tamino, Nicola Howard as Pamina, Dean Robinson as Sarastro. Nov 18,20.

Hansel & Gretel. Leah-Marian Jones & Regina Nathan sing the children, Anne-Marie Owens is the Witch. Dec 8,10,12. *Theatre Royal, Glasgow (0141-332 9000).*

Hansel & Gretel. Dec 2,5,15,17,19,22,23.

MARGARET DAVIES



Flight: Nuala Willis, right, as one of the stranded airline passengers in Jonathan Dove's acclaimed new opera.

Fidelio: The English Touring Opera perform Beethoven's only opera.



MUSIC

Colin Davis conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in the major orchestral works of Edward Elgar. Christoph von Dohnányi with the Philharmonia Orchestra explores the music of Mahler & the composers of the Second Viennese School. The tenor José Carreras gives a Christmas concert at the Albert Hall. The Choir and Orchestra of St John's, Smith Square celebrate Christmas by Candlelight in a week-long series of concerts. Seasonal music can be heard at all the major concert halls.

ALBERT HALL

Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212).

José Carreras. The much-loved tenor sings some of his favourite arias, songs & carols with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House & Choir, conducted by David Giménez.

Dec 15, 7.30pm.

BARBICAN HALL

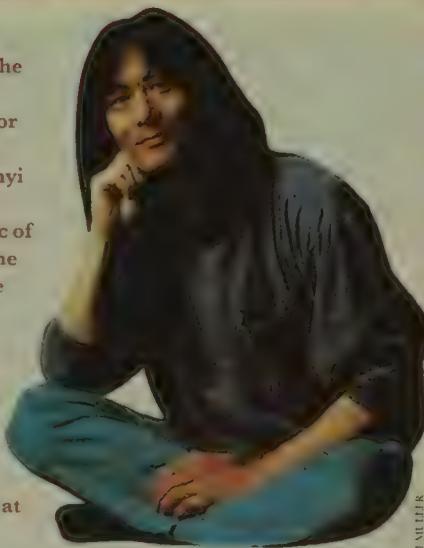
Silk St, EC1 (0171-638 8891).

Itzhak Perlman, violin. **Bruno Canino**, piano. Nov 16, 7.30pm.

Orchestra of the 18th Century. Frans Brüggen conducts JS Bach. Nov 20, 7.30pm.

Elliott Carter 90th birthday

concert. Oliver Knussen conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra in the London première of Carter's Piano



★ HIGHLIGHT ★

Rimsky-Korsakov Festival.

In a series of concerts the London Philharmonic Orchestra celebrates the world of Rimsky-Korsakov, performing his work in its European context. Mark Elder conducts works by Glinka, Stravinsky & Mussorgsky with music by Rimsky, Dec 10; Alexander Lazarev conducts Glazunov, Stravinsky & Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kashchey the Immortal*, Dec 13; Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts Sibelius, Brahms & Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*, Dec 17; 7.30pm. Carl Davis' score, based on themes by Rimsky-Korsakov, will accompany a projection of the silent film *The Thief of Bagdad*, Dec 6, 6pm.



MICHAEL O'BRIEN

9; the oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius*, with Robert Tear, Sara Mingardo & the London Symphony Chorus, Dec 13; 7.30pm.

Kent Nagano conducts Bernstein's *Candide*, with Jerry Hadley, June Anderson, Thomas Allen, John Duszak & the London Symphony Chorus. Dec 18 & 19, 7.30pm.

FESTIVAL HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

Philharmonia Orchestra.

Christoph von Dohnányi conducts a series of concerts devoted to Mahler & the Second Viennese School, starting with a concert performance of Berg's tragic opera *Wozzeck*, with Franz Hawlata in the title role & Deborah Polaski as his ill-fated mistress, Marie, Nov 14; Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* K 364, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, with

Anne Sofie von Otter & Ben Heppner, Nov 21; Mahler's Symphony No 2 (Resurrection); with Inger Dam-Jensen, Nathalie Stutzman & the Bach Choir, Nov 26; 7.30pm.

Vienna Philharmonic

Orchestra. Mariss Jansons conducts Weber's Overture *Oberon*, Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Dvorák's

Symphony No 8, Nov 17, 7.30pm.

The Royal Concert.

In aid of the Musicians' Benevolent Fund: Mark Wigglesworth conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in Tippett's *The Rose Lake*, Strauss' Four Last Songs, with Joan Rodgers,

Christmas by Candlelight:

With the Choir & Orchestra of St John's, Smith Square (see Christmas Music).



KATHY SMITH



LINDEN KINNAR

Festival Hall:

Pianist **John Lill** plays Beethoven, Brahms, and Rachmaninov.

Durante. Dec 17, 7.45pm.

St Andrew's Holborn

7 St Andrew's St, EC4 (0171-936 3606).

The Royal College of Organists

invites organists to devise programmes which reflect their individual interests & which take account of the possibilities of the organ at St Andrew's, home of the RCO. Martin Baker plays works by Mendelssohn, Pamela Decker, Dan Lockair, Nov 12; Anne Page plays Carl Rütti, JS Bach, Martini, Handel, Morandi, Nov 19; Patrick Russell plays Couperin's *Messe pour les Couvents* interleaved with Francis Grier's *Té Deum*, Nov 26; 6pm.

St John's

Smith Sq, SW1 (0171-222 1061).

Mary Bruce, piano. Beethoven, Schumann, Scriabin, Debussy. Nov 14, 7.30pm.

Stanislav Yovanovitch, piano. Works by Liszt including the complete Transcendental Studies. Nov 17, 7.30pm.

Choir of Clare College, Cambridge & former members of choir, **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment**. Roger Norrington conducts Handel, JS Bach, Carter, Rutter, Swayne. Nov 19, 7.30pm.

London Orpheus Choir & Orchestra. James Gaddarn conducts Handel's *Acis & Galatea*.

Queen Elizabeth Hall:

Joanna MacGregor, below, performs at Harrods International Piano Series.

Christmas Music:

Soprano Barbara Hendricks, below right, sings with the Stockholm Sinfonietta

Nov 21, 7.30pm.

Apollo Chamber Orchestra.

David Chernaik conducts JS Bach's complete Brandenburg Concertos. Dec 3, 7.30pm.

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-702 1377).

Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Pamela Frank directs Corelli, Bach Mozart, Dec 15; Kenneth Sillito directs Handel, Geminiani, Sammartini, Vivaldi, Walton, Suk, Dec 17; 7.30pm.

WALLACE COLLECTION

Manchester Sq, W1. Box office: Springboard Concerts Trust, 27 Elsham Rd, W1 4 8HB.

Music at the Wallace Collection.

A series of Sunday morning recitals, preceded by refreshments, with an opportunity to view the paintings: George Vassilev, guitar, Nov 15; Riga String Quartet, Nov 22; Oren Shevlin, cello, Mariko Ashikawa, piano, Nov 29; Marián Lapsansky, piano, Dec 6; 11.30am.

WIGMORE HALL

36 Wigmore St, W1 (0171-935 2141).

Nash Ensemble. Martyn Brabbins conducts Mahler/Schoenberg *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, with Brigitte Fassbaender, sprechstimme, Michelle Breedt, mezzo-soprano. Dec 1, 7.30pm.

Endellion String Quartet.

Mozart, Shostakovich, Schumann. Dec 3, 7.30pm.

Sumi Jo, soprano, **Jeff Cohen**, piano. Songs & arias by Giordani, Paisiello, Handel, Duparc, Gounod, Delibes, Schubert, Wolff. Dec 4, 7.30pm.

Andreas Scholl, counter-tenor, Markus Marki, piano. Nauwach, Albert, Krieger, Hammerschmidt, Handel. Dec 8, 7.30pm.

Peter Katin, piano. Scarlatti, Mozart, Rachmaninov, Debussy, Chopin. Dec 13, 4pm.

Melvyn Tan, piano. Mendelssohn, Weber, Schubert. Dec 16, 7.30pm.

Soirée Fauré. Sophie Daneman & Rosemary Joshua perform Fauré's duets & songs inspired by the Viardot sisters, plus other French chansons.



RIGHT: NICK WHITBY; FAR RIGHT: SIMPLAROK



Brahms' Symphony No 4. Nov 18, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Kurt Masur conducts Beethoven's Symphony No 8, Grieg's incidental music *Peer Gynt*, with the London Philharmonic Choir, Nov 19; Shostakovich's Symphony No 1, Strauss' *Don Quixote*, Nov 27; 7.30pm.

BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Taakaki Otaka conducts Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments, the UK première of Norgard's *Bach to the Future*, Sibelius' Symphony No 1. Nov 20, 7.30pm.

John Lill, piano, plays Beethoven, Brahms, Rachmaninov, Nov 22, 3.30pm.

Bach Choir, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. David Hill conducts Bach's Mass in B minor. Nov 24, 7.30pm.

BBC Concert Orchestra. Barry Wordsworth conducts Viennese music by Suppé, the Strauss family, Lehár, Mozart. Dec 1, 7.30pm.

Czech Connections. Leonard Slatkin conducts the Philharmonia in the music of Czech composers:

Smetana's Overture *The Bartered Bride*, Dvorák's Symphony No 9 (From the New World) & Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 1, with Till Fellner, Dec 15; Suk's Serenade for Strings, Janáček's Sinfonietta, Dvorák's Cello Concerto, with Steven Isserlis, Dec 18; 7.30pm.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

English Chamber Orchestra.

Ralph Gothoni is conductor & piano soloist in works by Schnittke, Mozart, Skempton. Nov 23, 7.45pm.

Chelsea Opera Group Chorus & Orchestra. Grant Llewellyn

conducts a concert performance of Rossini's *Semiramide*, with Nelly Miricioiu in the title role. Nov 28, 7.15pm.

Thameside Opera. George

Badacsonyi conducts Josef Tal's chamber opera *The Garden*, which features Adam, Eve & the Serpent. Nov 29, 5pm.

Harrods International Piano Series.

Jean-Philippe Collard plays Fauré, Ravel, Scriabin, Dec 6, 3.30pm. Joanna MacGregor plays works for prepared piano by John Cage, Django Bates & Talvin Singh, & student compositions, Dec 15, 7.45pm. Cristina Ortiz plays Poulenc, Viana, Mompou, Grieg, Stenhammar, Fernandez, Jan 26, 7.45pm.

Christian Zacharias, piano,

Frank Peter Zimmerman, violin, **Heinrich Schiff**, cello. Trios by Beethoven & Brahms & chamber works by Webern. Dec 16, 7.45pm.

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Christophe Coin is director & cello soloist in baroque concertos from Venice & Naples by Scarlatti, Pergolesi, Vivaldi,



Choir of King's College, Cambridge: sing Christmas music at St John's, Smith Square.

Dec 18, 7.30pm.

Kathryn Stott, piano. Ravel, Fauré, Gershwin, Rachmaninov.

Shostakovich, Maxwell Davies.

Copland, Fitkin. Dec 19, 7.30pm.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Christmas by Candlelight. The Square, conducted by John Lubbock, give seasonal concerts. Music of Finland, Dec 6, 3pm. Vaughan Williams, Handel, Montague, Albinoni, Bach, & carols for choir & orchestra. Dec 7. 7.30pm. Handel & Bach, Dec 8, 7.30pm. Tchaikovsky, Ravel & Shostakovich, Dec 9, 7.30pm. Mozart, Dec 10, 7.30pm. Handel, Purcell, Corelli, Vivaldi, Dec 11, 7.30pm. Handel's *Messiah*, Dec 12, 7.30pm. *St John's*.

Mozart Festival Orchestra, in period costumes, conducted by Ian Watson, with Mozart Festival Chorus, perform Handel's *Messiah*. Dec 5, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*

Hospitals Christmas Carol Concert. Massed choirs of the London hospitals, Ian Curror, organ, Charles Fullbrook, timpani & percussion, James Lockhart conducts carols & other Christmas music. Dec 12, 3pm & 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Mozart Festival Orchestra in period costumes, conducted by Ian Watson, play seasonal music by Handel, Bach, Mozart, Vivaldi, Corelli, & carols for all. Dec 13, 3.15pm. *Festival Hall*. Dec 24, 2.30pm & 7pm. *Albert Hall*.

BBC Concert Orchestra, **City of London Choir**, **Guildford Choral Society**. Robin Stapleton conducts seasonal music by Humperdinck,

Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofiev, Handel, Blake, Tchaikovsky, & carols for all. Dec 14 & 16, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Stockholm Sinfonietta. Gustaf Sjökvist conducts Christmas songs from around the world, with soprano Barbara Hendricks & Winchester Cathedral Boys Choir. Dec 14, 8pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Royal Choral Society, London Concert Orchestra. Richard Cooke conducts Christmas carols. Dec 16; with Claire Rutter, soprano, Justin Lavender, tenor, Angela Rippon introduces favourite arias & carols, Dec 17; 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Sonnerie. Monica Huggett directs early French Christmas music by Charpentier, Lalande, Marais, & others. Dec 17, 7.30pm. *Wigmore Hall*. **Choir of King's College, Cambridge**. Stephen Cleobury conducts seasonal works by Ades, Maxwell Davies, Byrd, Tallis, Howells, Darke, Praetorius. Dec 17.

Wallace Collection: Recitals and paintings, including "The Harpsichord Lesson" by Jan Steen.

7.30pm. *St John's*.

European Voices, Guildhall Strings. Simon Halsey conducts Handel's *Messiah*. Dec 18, 7.30pm. *St John's*.

Lesley Garrett, London Choral Society, BBC Concert Orchestra. Peter Robinson conducts popular arias, song & carols for all. Dec 18, 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Carol Singalong. TV presenter & composer Jonathan Cohen, with the London Concert Orchestra, presents songs & carols. Dec 19, 2pm & 5pm. *Albert Hall*.

Yehudi Menuhin School & diverse choirs perform carols for audience participation, in aid of the charity Scope. Dec 19, 7.15pm. *Elizabeth Hall*. **Salzburg Children's Choir**, **Lehár Schrammel Ensemble**. An Austrian Christmas celebration with waltzes, marches & traditional carols. Dec 19, 7.30pm. *Purcell Room*.

Huddersfield Choral Society, London Philharmonic Orchestra.

David Angas conducts Handel's *Messiah*. Dec 19, 8pm. *Albert Hall*.

The Parlour Quartet, in Victorian costumes & set, give a Christmas concert for children, Dec 20, 3pm; followed by a Victorian candlelight concert of seasonal songs, Dec 20, 7.30pm. *Purcell Room*.

Holst Singers, City of London Sinfonia. Stephen Layton

conducts Handel's *Messiah*. Dec 20, 7.30pm. *St John's*.

The Glory of Christmas. Ian Watson conducts the London Concert Orchestra & English Concert Chorus in seasonal music by Bach, Handel, Gounod, Adam, Clarke, Franck, Berlioz, & carols. Dec 20, 8pm. *Albert Hall*. Dec 24, 3pm. *Festival Hall*.

King's College Choir, Philharmonia Orchestra.

Stephen Cleobury conducts Vivaldi, Bach, Verdi, Tchaikovsky & carols. Maxwell Davies, Byrd, Tallis, Howells, Darke, Praetorius. Dec 21, 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

The Parley of Instruments.

Carols, anthems, fuguing tunes & devotional songs written between 1750 & 1850 for England's parish churches & dissenting chapels. Dec 22, 7.30pm. *Wigmore Hall*.

MARGARET DAVIES

EXHIBITIONS

Connoisseurs of contemporary art will head for the RCA's unusual sale of postcard-sized works by the great & the unknown, while shoppers may find the perfect Christmas gift at the Bankside Gallery or the Contemporary Crafts Association. The enigmatic Sir Stamford Raffles is celebrated at the British Museum, & there is still time to catch Picasso's colourful ceramics at the Royal Academy, Grinling Gibbons's exquisite woodcarvings at the V&A & John Singer Sargent's elegant portraits at the Tate.



London Bodies: an examination of body shapes from prehistoric times to the present at the London Museum.

Readers are advised to check opening days before making a special journey. Web addresses are given where relevant for those with Internet access.

BANKSIDE GALLERY

48 Hopton St, SE1 (0171-928 7521).

The Winter Collection. Original paintings & prints for sale, by members of the Royal Watercolour Society & the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers. As purchases, priced from £25 to £2,000, are carried away, the spaces are filled with new works. Nov 28-Jan 31. Tues 10am-8pm; Wed-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun 1-5pm. £3.50, concessions £2. Closed Dec 25-Jan 4.

BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

Cambridge Heath Rd, E2 (0181-980 2415).

The Magical World of Pooke & The Animal Shelf. The career of





Pint-size original art works that could be worth a fortune.

Taking a gamble on art

A postcard for £40? It's not what you'd normally expect to pay in Kensington High Street, but those on sale at the Royal College of Art in December are different.

Every one of the 2,500 cards on exhibition is an original work of art, and the challenge for connoisseurs is to distinguish between the hand of an eminent artist (last year's luminaries included Peter Blake, Eduardo Paolozzi and Paula Rego) or that of a new RCA student. Contributors sign their diminutive works on the back; the artist's identity is revealed to the buyer only after the show is over, when purchases are collected.

First held in 1994, this popular event raises money to help finance projects of the college's fine-art students. Last year's sales boosted the RCA's Fine Art Fund by £70,000, including a donation of £5 for each of the first 1,000 cards sold from sponsors Absolut Vodka.

Intending buyers can pop along to Kensington

for the preview afternoon (Wednesday, 2-7pm), but might be well advised to take sleeping-bags. So keen are purchasers to take part in this mass gamble (pictures by the greatest names have been valued at as much as £10,000) that in previous years queues have formed long before the 8am opening.

This year for the first time an Absolut Secret show will also be held in New York, where around 1,000 postcards featuring work by British and American artists will go on sale for \$100 each at the McKee Gallery from December 17-19. Those who attend the \$7 preview will be able to reserve their choices on the spot, so there should be no need to camp out on Fifth Avenue.

Dec 3-6. Thurs, Fri 8am-7pm; Sat, Sun 10am-5pm (preview Wed Dec 2, 2-7pm). *Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-590 4198).*

Dec 17-19. Thurs, Fri 10am-5:30pm; Sat 10am-noon (preview Wed Dec 16, 5.30-8pm). *McKee Gallery, 745 Fifth Avenue (4th floor), New York (212 645 8372).*

80-year-old English author Ivy Wallace, whose 1940s & 50s books about the endearing winged rabbit & stories of a little boy whose soft toys came to life are enjoying a new lease of life in paperback & on video. Until Jan 7. Mon-Thurs & Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun 2.30-5.50pm. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell St, WC1 (0171-636 1555). <http://www.british-museum.ac.uk>

Mantegna to Rubens. Drawings by Tintoretto, Rubens, Coreggio & Mantegna, on loan from the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Until Jan 10. £1, concessions 50p.

The Apocalypse, & the shape of things to come. Images—from 11th-century illuminated manuscripts to 1940s books, prints & drawings—inspired by the *Book of Revelation*. Dec 17-spring 1999. £4, concessions £2.

The Golden Sword: Sir Stamford Raffles & the East. The unknown faces of this enigmatic man, founder of Singapore, who was also a scholar & researcher, statesman & man of letters. Dec 19-Apr 1999. £4, concessions £2.

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun noon-6pm. Closed 24-26 Dec & Jan 1.

CONTEMPORARY APPLIED ARTS
2 Percy St, W1 (0171-436 2344).

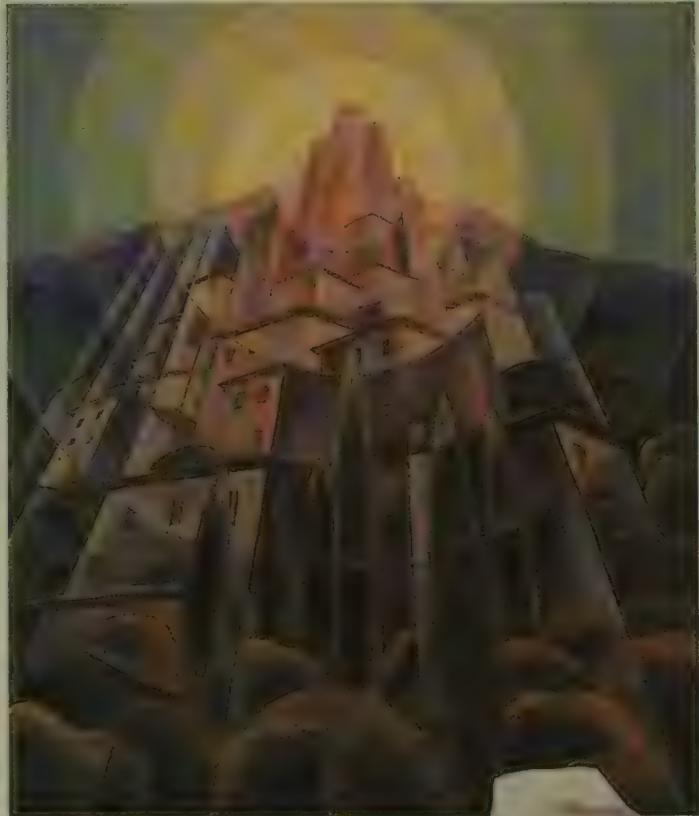
A Golden Christmas. Glittering textiles, ceramics, metalwork, pottery & turned wood help celebrate CAA's 50th anniversary year. Until Dec 24. Mon-Sat 10.30am-5.30pm.

COURTAULD INSTITUTE.

Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (0171-873 2526). <http://www.courtauld.ac.uk>

Material Evidence: Drawings from the Courtauld Collection.

After major refurbishment, the gallery reopens with an examination of the limitations imposed on Old Masters by the artistic materials available to



ESTORICK COLLECTION

39a Canonbury Sq, N1 (0171-704 9522). Balla & Futurist Italy: Paintings from the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome. Futurist paintings, done between 1913 & 1923 by the Italian artist Giacomo Balla make up the first loan exhibition for this new gallery. Until Dec 13. Wed-Sat 11am-6pm; Sun noon-5pm. £2.50, concessions £1.50, students free.

FESTIVAL HALL OVERS

South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). <http://www.sbc.org.uk>

Duane Hanson. Life-sized, direct-cast human figures made by this American artist between the late

Estorick Collection:

Futurist paintings on loan include "Paese Umbro", left, by Gerardo Dottori.

Ooh! What a Carry On:

The Museum of the Moving Image celebrates 40 years of the comedy film series.

them. Visitors can experiment with quill pens, chalk & charcoal. Until Jan 24. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm. £4 (admits also to main galleries), concessions £2, children (& everybody Mon 10am-2pm) free. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

DESIGN MUSEUM

28 Shad Thames, SE1 (0171-378 6055). A Legacy of Invention: the Work of Charles & Ray Eames.

Innovative designs by the American couple who created plywood furniture & decorative items from 1943-69. Until Jan 3. Daily 11.30am-6pm £5, concessions £4. Closed Dec 25, 26.



BELLOW: BRITISH FILM





Exhibitions

Museum material

Snails, drinks cans, ceramic insulators and Dolly Parton memorabilia may not be the usual stuff of exhibitions, but for a new museum opening on London's South Bank these unusual collections provide a new way to examine our relationship with material culture. Anyone passing at 6.30pm on the opening day, November 13, will be see "nine muses" abseiling down the north wall of the building to the accompaniment of music and slide projections relating to arts and sciences through the ages!

Over the next 18 months the Museum Of, as it is known, will be presenting a series of five innovative temporary shows. This first one, dubbed the Museum of Collectors, demonstrates some 40 weird and wonderful passions. As a foretaste, the first item—a "collection", in the form of a photograph of 200 local residents, workers and schoolchildren blown up to five-storey height—is already visible on an exterior wall of the building.

Themes of future shows are the Museum of Me, the Museum of Emotions, the Museum of the Unknown and the Museum of the River Thames; the organisers welcome contributions from people living or working in the area who would like to work with

1960s & his death in 1996. Dec 3-Jan 17. Daily 10am-10pm. Closed Dec 25. the_gallery@oxo

Oxo Tower Wharf, Bargehouse St, SE1 (0171-901 2255).

The Great Challenge 1998. Forty years on from the first international Political Cartoon Exhibition, top cartoonists from Australia, Cuba, Egypt, Greece, the US, the UK & many other countries submit works on the theme of Freedom of Speech. Nov 20-Dec 23. Daily 11am-6pm. HAMPTON COURT PALACE, East Molesey, Surrey (0181-781 9500). <http://www.hrp.org.uk>

Travels with the Prince. For his 50th-birthday celebration Prince Charles selects 50 works by British artists who have accompanied him on his foreign tours to hang in Christopher Wren's Cartoon Gallery alongside 50 of his own watercolours, & paintings by winners of The Prince of Wales's Young Artists' Award. Until Feb 28. Mon 10.15am-4.30pm; Tues-Sun 9.30am-4.30pm. £9.25 (includes admission to palace & grounds), OAPs £7, children £6.10. Closed Dec 24-26.

HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 3144). <http://www.hayward-gallery.org.uk>

Addressing the Century: 100 Years of Art & Fashion. From the designs of turn-of-the-century couturier Paul Poiret, who liberated women from the corset, influences considered include those of Matisse & Klimt, the Surrealists, the art & fashion innovators of the 1960s, plus Miyake, Sherman & other modern designers. Until Jan 11. £6, concessions £3.50. Daily 10am-6pm (Tues, Wed until 8pm). Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

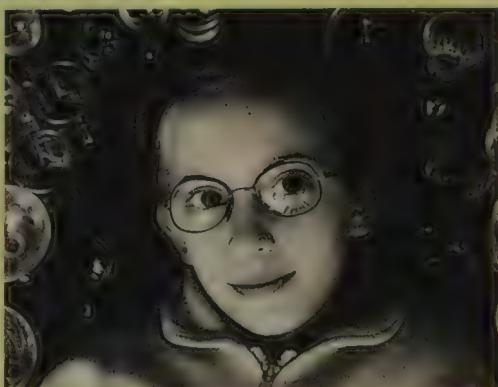


Royal Academy of Arts: 100 Masterpieces of Imperial Chinese Ceramics on show including this Kangxi porcelain bottle with a dragon.

LONDON TRANSPORT MUSEUM

39 Wellington St, WC2 (0171-379 6344). <http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk>

A Hard Day's Night. Colourful posters illustrating the glamour of the capital's nightlife from 1913 to the present, contrasted with black-&-white photographs of London



Sophie Jones bowled over by her collection of shot glasses.

professional artists to create displays on these topics.

The Christmas season on this up-and-coming stretch of the South Bank is in full swing with more than 30 retail design studios open to the public, selling fashion, jewellery, textiles, ceramics, lighting, furniture and fine and applied art. Exhausted exhibition-goers and shoppers can seek refreshment at several restaurants and bars.

The Museum of Collectors, The Bargehouse, Oxo Tower Wharf, SE1 (0171-928 1255). November 13-March 6. Wed-Fri 1-7.30pm; Sat, Sun noon-7.30pm. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

Transport's "behind the scenes" night time operations. Nov 20-May 1999. Sat-Thurs 10am-6pm; Fri 11am-6pm. £4.95, concessions £2.95; family ticket (2+2) £12.85. Closed Dec 24-26.

MALL GALLERIES

17 Carlton House Terrace, SW1 (0171-930 6844).

The Discerning Eye. Six eminent figures—art historian Richard Kendall, *The Art Newspaper* editor Anna Somers Cocks, Wallace Collection director Rosalind Savill, collector Philip Solomon, & artists Arturo di Stefano & David Gluck—select works from open & invited submissions. Items are limited to 20in x 20in in size, & all are for sale. Nov 19-Dec 6. Daily 10am-5pm.

MUSEUM OF LONDON

London Wall, EC2 (0171-600 3699). <http://www.museum-london.org.uk>

London Bodies. Human bones excavated during the last 20 years are shown alongside costumes relevant to their particular period from the museum's collection. Some of the more gruesome exhibits include the skull of King Charles I's executioner & a fragment of human skin that was once pinned to the door of Southwark Cathedral to deter Viking invaders. Until Feb 21. Tues-Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun noon-5.50pm. £4 (valid three months), concessions £2 (free daily from 4.30pm). Closed Dec 24-26 and Jan 1.

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

South Bank, SE1 (0171-401 2636).

Ooh! What a Carry On.

Celebrating 40 years of the low-budget, high-jinks British comedy feature-film series that ran from *Carry On Sergeant* (1958) to *Carry On Columbus* (1992), with movie clips, memories of the stars & plenty of hands-on exhibits. Dec 9-May 19. Daily 10am-

6pm. £6.25, children £4.50. Closed Dec 24-26.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-747 2885).

<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk>

Luca Signorelli in British Collections. The career of the Italian Renaissance artist examined through paintings & drawings, including the National Gallery's three large altarpieces *The Circumcision*, *The Adoration of the Shepherds* & *The Virgin & Child with Saints*. Until Jan 31. Sainsbury Wing:

Mirror Image: Jonathan Miller on Reflection. An examination of

the complex psychological process by which we accept reflective surfaces in works of art. Use is made of real mirrors as well as glass, paintings & photographs. Until Dec 13. £5.50, concessions £3.50. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed until 8pm); Sun noon-6pm. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

St Martin's Pl, WC2 (0171-306 0055).

British Sporting Heroes. Portraits & photographs of 200 years of sports idols, from bare-knuckle fighter Jem Belcher to cricketers W.G. Grace & Ian Botham & footballers Bobby Charlton & Michael Owen. Until Jan 24. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm. £4, concessions £3. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (0171-938 9123).

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk>

BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1998. Around 150 top-class plant & animal photographs from the winners & runners-up in this prestigious annual competition. Until Feb 27. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun 11am-5.50pm. £6, OAPs & concessions £3.20, children £3. Closed Dec 23-26.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

Piccadilly, W1 (0171-300 8000).

Picasso: Painter & Sculptor in Clay. Major exhibition, focusing on the ceramics that the artist created in the South of France during the last 30 years of his life. Until Dec 16. £7, concessions £6, children £2.50 & £1. **100 Masterpieces of Imperial Chinese Ceramics.** As part of the Asian Arts in London event, this is the first public showing of Ming, Qing & other pieces from the Au Bak Ling Collection. (Information on London-wide sales, seminars & lectures for Asian ArtsWeek, Nov 10-21, from 01787 282288). Until Dec 20. £5.50, concessions £4.50, students £3.80, children £2.50 & £1.

Life? Or Theatre? More than 1,000 small gouaches created by artist Charlotte Salomon between 1940 & 1944 reflecting her experience of life in Nazi-dominated Europe. Until Jan 17. £5.50, concessions £4.50, students £4, children £2.50 & £1. Daily 10am-6pm. Closed Dec 25.

British Museum: A Javanese shadow puppet, part of The Golden Sword: Sir Stamford Raffles and the East exhibition.



SERPENTINE GALLERY

Kensington Gardens, W2 (0171-402 6075).

Louise Bourgeois. Recent work by this New-York-resident French artist, still prolific at the age of 87, including steel sculptures, stuffed fabric figures, & installations draped in tapestry & the artist's own clothes. Nov 18-Jan 10. Daily 10am-6pm. Closed Dec 24-27.

LATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8008).

<http://www.tate.org.uk>

John Singer Sargent. Around 150 paintings by the 19th-century American artist whose portraits caused Rodin to dub him "the Van Dyck of our times". Also landscape oils, & Sargent's monumental World War I painting *Gassed*. Until Jan 17. Daily 1am-5.50pm.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM
Cromwell Rd, SW7 (0171-938 8349).
<http://www.vam.ac.uk>

Aubrey Beardsley. Books & posters by the sensuous, symbolist British illustrator, who died of consumption 100 years ago, alongside work by illustrious contemporaries Wilde, Beerbohm & W.B. Yeats. Until Jan 10.

Grinling Gibbons & the Art of Carving. Cascades of lifelike leaves, flowers, fruits & birds by the greatest of decorative woodcarvers. Until Jan 24. Mon noon-5.50pm; Tues-Sun 10am-5.50pm. £5, concessions £3, students & all from 4.30-5.45pm free. Closed Dec 24-26. See box story on 17th-century Christmas, page 72.

ANGELA BIRD

SPORT

South Africa's rugby XV are likely to cut a swathe through their British opponents during their winter tour. Some of the world's greatest tennis players will be at Olympia where, a few days later, top showjumpers compete in the Christmas equestrian event. Hardy sports fans will line the RAC Rally route to cheer on Colin McRae, or pack picnics for the start of the point-to-point season.

DARTS

Winmau World Masters'. Nov 27, 28. Lakeside, Frimley Green, nr Camberley, Surrey (0181-883 5544).

British Open. Englishman Colin Monk, the title-holder, will be fending off Raymond Barneveld, from Holland, & other overseas challengers. Dec 28, 29. Paragon Hotel, Lillie Rd, SW6 (0181-883 5544).

LOUISIANISM

Olympia International Show Jumping.

Top riders compete in such events as the Christmas Carol Stakes & Mince Pie Puissance. Additional entertainment for this year includes displays by Cossack riders from the Ukraine & by members of France's ceremonial Garde Républicaine, Dec 17-21. Olympia, Hammersmith Rd, W14 (0171-373 3113).

HORSE RACING

Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup. Nov 28. Newbury, Berks (01635 40015).

Tripleprint Gold Cup. Dec 12. Cheltenham, Glos (01242 513014).

King George VI Chase. Dec 26. Kempton Park, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey (01932 782292).

Coral Welsh National. Dec 28. Chepstow, Gwent (01291 622260).

Point-to-Point season starts. The

See stars: such as Chris Wilkinson at the British National Championships.

Olympia: Christmas fun with competitors including France's Garde Républicaine.

RIGHT: KENNY GLEESON; FAR RIGHT: ANGELA BIRD

Springboks leap into action

When it comes to rugby union, the home nations can't hold a candle to the big boys from the southern hemisphere. And South Africa, who play Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England in successive weeks in early winter, are currently the best of the best. The Springboks, winners of the last World Cup in 1995, can claim to be the world's top team after overcoming Australia and New Zealand in an enthralling Tri-Nations tournament in the summer.

Their forward power is illustrated by Ollie Le Roux, a 19-stone prop with frightening mobility. With the immense kicking of fly-half Henry Honiball, the elusive running of scrum-half Joost van der Westhuizen and a string of hard-hitting backs, coach Nick Mallett's side will be formidable opponents.

And the tourists arrive with a mighty incentive: a "Grand Slam" over the British nations would give them 18 consecutive Test wins—one more than the world record set by Brian Lochore's New Zealanders three decades ago.

The tour kicks off with South Africa's Wembley clash with Wales on November 14. But don't expect a close encounter; when the teams last met in June, Wales were crushed 96-13.

ALAN PEARLEY



Springboks' Joost van der Westhuizen.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

RUGBY

South Africa tour. The current world champions take on Britain & Ireland. South Africa v Wales.

Nov 14, Wembley Stadium, Middx

(0181-900 1234); v Scotland, Nov 21, Murrayfield, Edinburgh (0131-346 5000); v Ireland, Nov 28,

Lansdowne Road, Dublin (00 353 6684601); v England, Dec 5,

Twickenham, Middx (0181-744 3111). See box story.

inhospitable areas of England & Wales, Britain's Colin McRea will be hoping to repeat his last year's triumph. Nov 21-24. Starts & finishes Cheltenham, Glos (01753-68173).

TENNIS

British National

Championships. Rising British talent includes Chris Wilkinson &

Miles MacLagan & lady players Karen Cross & Sam Smith. Nov 17-22. Telford International Centre, Telford, Salop (01952 291919).

Champions' Challenge for the Delta Air Lines ATP Senior Tour of Champions. Bjorn Borg & John McEnroe play Wilander, Noah, Cash, Vilas, Forget & other great names. Dec 3-6. Olympia, W14 (0171-385 5779).

ANGELA BIRD

1999 fixtures start with the Cambridgeshire Harriers Hunt Club event. Jan 9. Cottenham, nr Cambridge. Full list available, with sue, from Jockey Club, 42 Portman Sq, WIH 0EN (0171-46 4921).

MOTORSPORT

Network Q Rally of Great Britain.

As competitors hurl their vehicles around the more



Dome Dreaming

In February of this year the contents of the Millennium Dome—14 themed zones around a central performance area—were finally revealed to a public already up in arms at the staggering £275 million spent on the actual structure. The idea of a giant body to explore and a Spirit Zone to unite religions of the world did little to convince them of the Dome's *raison d'être*. So what do people *really* want to see in this 80,000m sq space on the Greenwich Peninsula?



MICHAEL WINNER, FILM DIRECTOR

“I would put in the greatest collection of an ever assembled— that would really give people something worth looking at.”

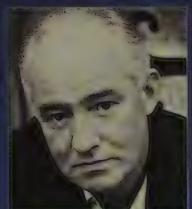
PHILIP TREACEY, MILLINER

“London is the home of the fashions, so I would naturally place a beautiful hat in the Dome.”



DALE BARBARA CARTLAND NOVELIST

“I would like a prayer to God to be the focal point of the Dome.”



DAVID CALDER, RSC ACTOR

“I would like to build the Dome in the first place, but if I had to fill it with anything, I would put in a giant picture of myself with my agent's number, to ensure my immortality.”

FREDERICK FORSYTHE NOVELIST

“I would be most grateful if the Dome contained a very large block of Somers, a reliable detonator, and the missed figure of Peter Mandelson. Nothing personal, you understand, but I just feel that the expenditure of £750 million of public money on an indulgence in a country where menses are paid like pimps, is an outrage.”



SHELLY VON STRUNKEL, ASTROLOGER

“Since London's combination of light and haze obscures them, turn the Millennium Dome into a Sun Chamber. Let the stars, and planets, our own solar system, move with the hours, rising and setting, showing us what we'd see—if we could— in the skies above us.”



BRIAN SEWELL, ART CRITIC

“I would like to see a world famous of the British diversity with No exhibition of dumbing down acceptable. I know what we're going to get.”



EDWINA CARTER, FORMER MP/WRITER

“What would I like to see in the Millennium Dome? People. Because what we're not, will the transport links be ready? There are too much talk about displays, but how are the projected 12 million people going to get to the site? Have you ever tried getting to Greenwich? If the tube isn't ready I don't know how anyone will get there and back.”



CLARE FRANCIS, NOVELIST

“I would like to see a world famous of the British diversity with No exhibition of dumbing down acceptable. I know what we're going to get.”



GARRY RHOADES, CHEF

“I would like (biscuit) stalls to be on offer in the Dome, in loving memory of eating out of the bone.”



DR SIMON THURLEY, DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM OF LONDON

“The Millennium Dome is just the right size to take all the reserve collections of all the National Museums. I'd display them and christen it 'The Nation's Attic'. At the exit I would put a large map to help people avoid traffic jams on the way home.”

OTHER EVENTS

HAMPTON COURT PALACE offers atmospheric lantern-lit tours of King Henry VIII's apartments, a feast of chocolate is launched in Victoria, & a new 20th-century art fair opens at Olympia. Christmas is welcomed with carols round the Trafalgar Square tree, a Christmas pud relay race in Covent Garden & pheasants of events at the V&A.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

AFTER-DARK SECRETS. A guide in Tudor costume leads visitors on a lantern-lit tour of King Henry VIII's royal apartments. Until Dec 22. Tues-Sun 5.30pm, 6pm & 6.30pm. Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey. (0181-781 9540). See box story.

rooms of this medieval brick town house in Hackney, built in 1535 for Sir Rale Sadler, are filled with stalls offering traditional Christmas gifts.

Married wine & mince pies available to review-exhausted shoppers. Nov 28, Dec 1-3, 5-8pm. St John's House, 2 & 4 Hoxton Square, E9 (0181 509 2624).

THE 20th CENTURY. New year, which international dealers offer a selection of work from 20th-century designers. Lectures on silver, fashion, ceramics, sculpture, photographs & the decorative arts. Dec 2-6. Wed-Fri.

International Festival of Christmas Craft Fair. The historic

Chocoholics' heaven

If you haven't tried quaffing chocolate-flavoured stout or spreading chilli-and-chocolate paste over your food, there are some surprises in store at the International Festival of Chocolate, being held for the first time in the UK.

Dedicated chocolate-lovers will be flocking to Westminster to nibble some of the delicacies on offer from around the world: Godiva and Neubuis chocolates, from Belgium, home-grown delights from Thorntons and Ackermans, lusciously dark Valrhona from France, and delectable white chocolate creams laced with saffron and vanilla from Bojezen of Copenhagen.

The organisers' aim is to promote a better understanding of chocolate and of the different permutations of the cocoa bean. The British at present consume 10kg of the confection per person per year—can we learn to be more discriminating, and perhaps work towards an ultimate accolade of Master of Chocolate?

Among the exhibitors will be Belgium's Marie du Chocolat, the UK's Chocolate Society, and the International Cocoa Organisation—which is showing an A to Z of the history of chocolate. Demonstrations include Grand Ronay's painted chocolate designs, and cooking lessons at which aficionados will create an entire meal based on chocolate. Students of the Royal College of Art will be



Aficionados will be spoilt for choice at the UK's first chocolate festival.

sculpting large blocks provided by Cadbury's—the chocolate blocks of art will be auctioned off at the end of each day in aid of the Save the Children Fund.

As this is the period that sees 80 per cent of the year's chocolate sales, plenty of Christmas-present ideas are promoted—including a chocolate-making kit, truffles, chocolates and a whole box of "Chocolate Grams". And visitors can sample all kinds of hot, cold and alcoholic chocolate beverages at what else—a "chocolate bar". International Festival of Chocolate, RHS Halls, Yiewsley, Sp11 3HT (0181 295 0935). November 27-29. Fri noon-6pm; Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 10am-5.30pm. £7.50 (admission tickets £5).

11am-8pm; Sat 11am-7pm; Sun 11am-5pm. *Olympia, Hammersmith Rd, W14 (0171-370 8899).*

Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square

Switch-on for the white lights illuminating the giant Norway spruce. Dec 3, dusk. Carols are sung around the tree daily until Dec 24, 3-10pm; illumination continues until Jan 6.

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-211 6393)

Great Christmas Pudding Race.

Relay race in which around 10 teams negotiate a series of obstacles while bearing a holly-decorated pudding on a tray. Proceeds go to the Cancer Research Campaign. New entrants welcome; minimum donation £50. Dec 5, 11.30am. *Covent Garden Piazza, WC2 (0181-404 8760).*

Road Run & Rally.

London Transport Museum moves some of its reserve collection of historic buses from storage in Hackney across London to new premises in Acton, pausing at Covent Garden between 11am & 3.30pm. Dec 5. *Information on route & timings from London Transport Museum, Wellington St, WC2 (0171-379 6344).*

Sale: Vintage Cars & Motorcycles.

Sotheby's offers a selection of automobilia & classic vehicles lined up on display beneath the wings of some of the museum's historic planes. Dec 7. *RAF Museum, Grahame Park*

Dine and tour at Henry VIII's court

Fortified with mulled wine and such Tudor-style canapés as quail's eggs, trout pasties, chicken pâté, tongue tartlets and mini-mince pies, prepare to step back 400 years. Leaving the blazing hearth in Hampton Court Palace's cavernous kitchen—where 200 cooks prepared daily meals for 800 courtiers—you pick up a candle-lantern and join a sumptuously dressed courtier in an eerily Tudor atmosphere of shadowy corners and dim lighting to learn how life was lived in the days of King Henry VIII.

Following the route taken by visiting dignitaries, the costumed guide—who might be a gentleman of the privy chamber or a lady courtier—leads up the stone stairs to the Great Hall, where ambassadors waited beneath the massive hammerbeam roof until the

all-powerful monarch designed to appear. The tour is embellished with details of Tudor life: 1,200 oxen, 8,000 sheep and 53 head of wild boar were consumed annually in the palace; certain fabrics and colours were reserved for members of high society; the infant Edward VI was baptised



Step back in time 400 years to the Tudor court of the all-powerful Henry VIII, on a lantern-lit tour of Hampton Court Palace.

at midnight beneath the star-spangled ceiling of the ornate Chapel Royal; the ill-fated Catherine Howard ran screaming along the Haunted Gallery to beg for mercy after her husband had discovered her adultery.

Back outside in the Clock Court, where the tall brick chimneys stand out in the moonlight, your imagination peoples the cobbled yard with courtiers and horses. Everywhere, you feel the presence of the king whose word was law and for whom the palace was home.

After-Dark Secrets: 90-minute tours by lanternlight. Until Dec 22. Tues, Sat, Sun 5.30pm, 6pm & 6.30pm. £21 (including refreshments). Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey (0181-781 9540).

Recreate a 17th-century Christmas

The Lord of Misrule—a traditional figure of mirth and merriment—leads the fun at the opening spectacle in a celebration of the life and times of the great woodcarver Grinling Gibbons. On December 13 the jolly lord presides over a presentation of dances from the English Court, and conducts his youthful followers through some of the V&A's galleries.

Young visitors can make their own Lord of Misrule staff and hobby-horse, decorate handkerchiefs with bells, or indulge in creating all manner of things from the museum's Family Activity Cart, and a Christmas atmosphere is ensured as Fiona Collins weaves magical tales of 17th-century England and school choirs sing traditional carols.

Grinling Gibbons, in whose honour these events were conceived, executed commissions for Charles II and George I, created exquisite decoration at Trinity College Cambridge and St Paul's Cathedral, and carved extravagant foliage for Chatsworth, Burghley and other stately homes. No man before him, said Horace Walpole, "gave to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers". There will be demonstrations by some of today's master carvers and opportunities to handle traditionally-made carvings, and to discuss their intricacies with craftsmen and women who have worked on the restoration of Windsor Castle and Uppark.

And if the Cosimo Panel (commissioned by King



Young visitors can get to grips with Christmas past with hands-on activities at the V&A.

Charles II as a gift for the Duke of Tuscany) and other masterpieces in the current Grinling Gibbons exhibition have inspired you, there is a chance to create your own version of the cascading limewood garlands. At day-long workshops on December 4, 8 and 12 florist Ercole Moroni shows how to use real pomegranates, foliage and flowers to recapture the luxuriant effect.

Seventeenth-century Christmas at the V&A. Dec 13-Jan 3. Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (full programme from Education department on 0171-938 8638). For details of Grinling Gibbons exhibition, see Exhibitions listings.

Museum admission charge of £5 (concessions £3) includes most events; floral workshop £7.50 (covers admission, all materials and a light lunch).

Way, Hendon, NW9 (information from Sotheby's (0171-493 8080).

National Cat Club Show.

The Moscow Cat Museum will be among exhibitors at this year's show, which features some 2,000 felines—pedigree to family pets, & the World of Cats centre giving advice on choosing the appropriate breed for different lifestyles. Dec 12, 10.30-5.30pm. *Earl's Court, SW5 (0171-373 3113).*

Tree-Dressing. Children are invited to join a workshop to learn about the myths, magic & images behind this old winter ritual & to make biodegradable decorations to hang on the trees of the museum's wildlife garden. Morning sessions for 4-to-6-year-olds; afternoon for 7-to-11-year-olds. Dec 12, 13, 11am & 2pm. *Natural History Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (booking on 0171-938 9090).*

17th-Century Christmas at the V&A.

Create floral swags, learn period dances, make a hobby-horse or join in traditional carol-singing. Dec 13-Jan 3. *Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7 (call 0171-938 8638 for full programme). See box story.*

Tricks of the Trade. A witty show for children of all ages by The Great Xar, an eccentric magician who calls in members of the audience to help create a work of art good enough to hang on the gallery's walls. Dec 29-31, Jan 2-3, 11.30am & 2.30pm (Sun 2.30pm only). *National Gallery, Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-747 2885).*

ANGELA BIRD

Christmas recipes from Lorna Wing



Continued from "Seasonal Style" feature, page 28.

GILDED SACHERTORTE

The only chocolate cake I ever make is this one (shown above), which has good keeping qualities and freezes well. Serves 20.

For the chocolate sachertorte

3 large eggs, whole, plus 12 large eggs, separated

500g caster sugar

625g dark, semi-sweet chocolate

350g ground almonds

1tbsp freshly ground coffee grains

For the icing

450g dark, semi-sweet chocolate

175g unsalted butter, cubed, plus extra for greasing

4tbsp smooth apricot jam

For the gilded decoration

12 sheets 23.5-25 carat transfer gold leaf

12 cape gooseberries, papery skins peeled back

You will also need a 25.5cm round cake pan, some parchment paper, newspaper and string

Line the base and insides of the greased pan with parchment paper. Wrap four layers of newspaper around the outside of the pan and tie with string.

Heat the oven to 375°F/190°C/gas mark 5. Beat the whole eggs, egg yolks and sugar in an electric mixer for 10 minutes. Melt the chocolate for the cake in a bowl over a pan of hot water. Stir it into the beaten egg mixture with the ground almonds and coffee. Whisk the egg whites until stiff and fold into the egg mixture.

Pour the mixture into the cake pan and bake for 1½ hours. Cover the top of the cake with damp parchment paper and dampen it every 20 minutes while baking. The cake is cooked when a skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean. Cool the cake in the cake pan for 1 hour before turning it out onto a wire rack.

Melt the chocolate for the icing in a bowl over a pan of hot water. Add the butter, bit by bit, stirring well. Cool the icing until it sets to a thick, pouring consistency. Trim the top of the cake, if necessary, and turn it upside down on the wire rack. Melt the jam in a small pan over the heat, then brush it over the cake. Pour the icing over the cake and smooth it evenly over the top and sides. Let the icing set for two hours before decorating.

Lay a sheet of gold leaf with its backing paper still in place on the centre of the cake. Use the back of a small round-bladed knife, gently rub the paper, transferring the gold on to the cake. Arrange the cape gooseberries on top of the gilded cake and serve.

Advance preparation: bake the cake one week ahead, wrap well in two layers of foil and store in an airtight box in a cool place. Ice up to two days ahead and store uncovered in the fridge (the condensation will disappear four hours after taking it out). Decorate eight hours before serving and keep cool.

Freezing: freeze the cake, wrapped as above, in an airtight box, for up to 8 weeks before it is needed.



VANILLA SHORTBREADS WITH FROMAGE FRAIS & LIME CURD

These oh-so-pretty, scallop-edged shortbreads are good enough to serve on their own, but the easy fromage frais and lime-curd topping is a nice touch, particularly for celebratory occasions. Makes 12.

For the vanilla shortbreads

50g unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing

110g plain flour, sifted, plus extra for rolling

pinch of salt

25g vanilla sugar

For the fromage frais & lime-curd topping

2tbsp fromage frais or blanc, or lightly

whipped cream

2tsp lime or lemon curd

few shavings of cedar, or candied citrus peel, to decorate

You will also need a 6cm fluted cutter and a 5mm plain piping nozzle

Blend the butter, flour and salt together in a food processor until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Mix in the sugar and then turn out onto a lightly floured surface and lightly knead to make a firm dough.

Roll the dough out to a thickness of 5mm, stamp out 12 discs using the fluted cutter and lift them onto a lightly greased baking tray.

Use the piping nozzle to stamp out a ring of small circles around the inside edges of the shortbread discs to decorate them. Chill for 30 minutes.

Heat the oven to 350°F/180°C/gas mark 4 and bake the shortbreads for 12 minutes or until they are light golden. Transfer them to a wire rack to cool.

Spoon the fromage frais onto the shortbreads and top with a little lime curd. Swirl the two together with a skewer, then decorate with the candied peel and serve.

Advance preparation: make and bake the shortbread up to four days before and store in an airtight container. Add the topping 30 minutes before serving.

Freezing: freeze the baked shortbreads up to three weeks before eating and crisp up in a preheated oven at 350°F/180°C/gas mark 4 for 3-4 minutes. Cool before topping.

GINGER CORDIAL WITH STAR ANISE ICE-CUBES

This refreshing and aromatic drink (shown left) is a popular non-alcoholic treat for those driving. Serves 10.

20 star anise

225g stem ginger in syrup

2.25 litres sparkling mineral water

Freeze the star anise with plain water in ice-cube trays for 4-6 hours.

Blend the stem ginger with all its preserving syrup and a little of the mineral water in a food processor for about 1 minute or until really well puréed. Divide the mixture between glasses, top up with the remaining water and stir well. Add the star anise ice-cubes and serve.

Advance preparation: purée the ginger, cover and chill up to 7 days ahead. Dilute the ginger cordial to order. *Freezing:* make the ice-cubes up to 7 days in advance.

NEW ORLEANS COFFEE WITH CHOCOLATE SPOONS

Coffee spoons are dipped into melted chocolate for a frivolous touch (shown below). Makes 10.

For the spoons

50g plain, semi-sweet chocolate, broken into squares

For the New Orleans coffee

570ml strong hot coffee

1tsp ground cinnamon

1tbsp sugar

zest of 2 oranges, pared

zest of 1 lemon, pared

120ml brandy

120ml Cointreau or Grand Marnier

You will also need some muslin or cheesecloth and 10 coffee spoons

Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of simmering water, for about 10 minutes. Dip the spoons in the chocolate and put them on a plate. Chill for 45 minutes. Remove the chocolate spoons from the fridge 10 minutes before serving.

Heat the coffee, cinnamon, sugar and both zests over a low heat in a pan. When hot, but not boiling, stir in the alcohol. Strain the coffee through muslin and serve in cups with the chocolate spoons.



CELEBRITY QUIZ, page 40

TINY CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS ON CINNAMON SHORTBREADS

These Christmas puddings are always greeted with delight. Makes 10.

1/2 quantity Vanilla Shortbread Recipe (see opposite) made with 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon butter, for greasing flour, for dusting 110g Christmas or plum pudding 25g ready-made white marzipan red & green food colouring icing sugar, for dusting 25g ready-made white icing 1tsp apricot jam You will also need a 4cm and a 2.5cm fluted round cutter, and a tiny holly leaf cutter

Follow the basic vanilla shortbread recipe, adding the ground cinnamon to the sifted flour. Heat the oven to 350°F/180°C/gas mark 4. Roll out the dough, on a slightly floured surface, to a thickness of 5mm. Stamp out 10 discs, place on a lightly greased baking tray. Bake for 12 minutes. Transfer them to a wire rack to cool.

Divide the Christmas pudding into 10 pieces and roll each into a ball. Break off a third of the marzipan and add a few drops of red colouring. Add green colouring to the remainder and knead both batches. Roll out the green marzipan on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and stamp out 20 leaves using the holly cutter. Make 30 tiny berries from the red marzipan.

Roll out the white icing on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar and stamp out 10 small circles. Place one on each pudding. Moisten a pastry brush, dampen the leaves and berries and stick them on top. Set oven to 375°F/190°C/gas mark 5. Place the puddings on the cinnamon shortbreads on a baking sheet. Cover with foil. Warm for 12-15 minutes.

Advance preparation: up to 4 days before,

bake the shortbreads; roll and decorate the puddings. Store separately in airtight containers. Freezing: freeze the baked shortbreads up to 3 weeks ahead and crisp up in a preheated oven at 350°F/180°C/gas mark 4 for 2-3 minutes. Cool before use.

GOLD VODKA

Edible loose leaf gold is available from art shops. Makes 10 (see page 28).

570ml vodka

4 sheets 23.5 or 24 carat loose leaf gold

Pour vodka into a blender. Lift the sheets of gold leaf off the backing paper and add to the vodka. Blend for 30 seconds. Transfer vodka back into the bottle and freeze for 2 hours. Shake the bottle before serving. Freezing: freeze up to 4 weeks before.

HOT BUTTERED RUM

Let guests add their own spiced butter to this drink. Makes 10 (see page 28).

570ml dark rum

570ml boiling water

10 cinnamon sticks

For the spiced butter

50g unsalted butter, softened

50g soft brown sugar

1/2tsp ground cinnamon

1/2tsp ground nutmeg

1/2 vanilla bean, split & the seeds scraped out, or 1/2tsp vanilla extract

Beat together the ingredients for the spiced butter. Transfer to a serving bowl. Heat the rum in a pan until very hot. Add the boiling water. Put a spoon in each glass to prevent cracking, then pour in the rum mixture. Remove the spoons and add the cinnamon sticks. Serve with the butter—1 heaped teaspoon per glass. Stir well. Freezing: make spiced butter up to 4 weeks ahead.

SPECIAL READER OFFER

Party Food by Lorna Wing is set to become this season's essential cookery book. Packed with ideas for entertaining, it shows you how to turn a relaxed family evening into a special occasion—or how to organise a major event. It is offered to readers of *The Illustrated London News* at the specially reduced price of £17, including post and packaging (instead of RRP £20). To obtain your copy, please call 01933 443863 with your credit card details, or send a cheque, made payable to Octopus Publishing Group, to Conran Octopus Books Direct, 27, Sanders Road, Wellingborough, Northants, NN8 4NL. Please quote reference H415.



ANSWERS

SUE LAWLEY

1 Arthur Askey. He was a castaway of Roy Plomley's on four occasions 2 The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts' Club Band (1967). Their faces were all used in the magic crowd on Peter Blake's sleeve 3 They are both based on plays by Beaumarchais; Paisiello (Italian, 1740-1816); 4 a 4, b 4 c 104 5 Schubert 6 a Henry of Navarre (Henry IV of France) b Napoleon c Metternich d Dr Johnson 7 Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury was Queen Elizabeth's first minister in 1600; Robert Cecil, Marquess of Salisbury was Queen Victoria's Prime Minister in 1900 8 Nigel Williams. The books *The Wimbledon Poisoner*, *They Came from SW19 and East of Wimbledon* 9 Redmond O'Hanlon took James Fenton into the Heart of Borneo 10 Austen Chamberlain (party leader 1921-1922).

MAEVE BINCHY

1 Nine 2 24 3 Three 4 10 5 Eight 6 Six 7 Four 8 Four 9 12 10 Two.

MAX HASTINGS

1 A fall 2 A sea trout 3 RS Surtrees 4 An otter 5 A McNab 6 Yew 7 A salmon fly 8 A trout fly 9 14 10 The British record salmon (64lb from the Tay).

ANTONIA FRASER

1 Six: Mary I, Elizabeth I, Mary II, Anne, Victoria, Elizabeth II (Matilda was not crowned) 2 Five each of Catherine and Anne: Catherine de Valois (Henry VI), Catherine of Aragon, Catherine Howard, Catherine Parr (all Henry VIII), Catherine of Braganza (Charles II), Anne of Bohemia (Richard II), Lady Anne Neville (Richard III), Anne Boleyn, Anne of Cleves (both Henry VIII), Anne of Denmark (James I)

3 Her grandmother, Elizabeth of York 4 Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I, was nicknamed "Queen Henry" by Puritans; she was named for her father, Henri IV of France 5 Elizabeth, daughter of James I, who became briefly in 1619 Queen of Bohemia when her husband was elected to the throne; he was soon deposed 6 First cousin once removed: Queen Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII, was the first cousin of Mary, Queen of Scots' father James V of Scotland 7 Catherine Parr, widow of Henry VIII, who married Sir Thomas Seymour, but kept her title as Queen 8 None. Victoria, although her husband was also king of Prussia, was known as the Empress

Frederick of Germany; Alice was Grand Duchess of Hesse; the others did not marry rulers 9 Queen Mary, widow of George V, Queen Elizabeth, widow of George VI and Queen Elizabeth II 10 Queen Elizabeth II from 6 February 1952 (death of George VI) until 24 March 1953 (death of Queen Mary) 10 The Present Duke of Gloucester. His father, Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester would have succeeded King George VI in 1952 as the brother nearest in age.

SUSAN HAMPSHIRE

1 Willie Carson 2 Danny Blanchflower 3 Bobby Moore 4 Fred Perry 5 Judi Dench 6 Fernando Cacho 7 Sir Stanley Matthews 8 Dame Diana Rigg 9 Ting-a-ling 10 Ian Holm.

THE BULL, AMBRIDGE, QUIZ TEAM

1 Leonie and Coriander 2 7 (Her daughter Jennifer's four children, Adam, Debbie, Kate and Alice, her son Tony's surviving children, Helen and Tommy and her daughter Lillian's son James) 3 a Sid and Kathy Perks b Caroline Pemberton c The Cat and Fiddle d Sean Myerson and his partner, Peter 4 Reg and Bunty Hebdon 5 a Baggy and Snatch Foster, b Alf c Rosie Mabbott; in Great Yarmouth 6 a St Stephen's, b Shula Hebdon and (until he went into the old people's home, The Laurels) Tom Forrest c Robin Stokes: Jerry Buckell d Dartington and Penny Hassett 7 16th November 1957 8 Lillian is Peggy Woolley's elder daughter, sister of Jennifer and Tony 9 a Underwoods b Organic yoghurt and ice cream 10 January 1, 1951.

SIR ELTON JOHN

1 Eduard Manet 2 Thomas Gainsborough 3 Jackson Pollock 4 Paul Gauguin 5 Francis Bacon 6 George Stubbs and Damien Hirst 7 Jasper Johns 8 Andy Warhol 9 Arthur Devlin 10 Henry Moore.

SIR ALEC GUINNESS

1 Barsetshire (The Barsetshire Chronicles by Trollope) 2 King Lear 3 Red Duster 4 The Duke of Medina Sidonia 5 Russia 6 John Keats 7 Shropshire 8 The Phoenix 9 Clerihew (Invented by E Clerihew Bentley) 10 10 days (3-12 May) 11 Earl Haig 12 They each had the same family nickname—Mouse.

MARTY LEWIS

1 Arkansas 2 William Fox Talbot 3 Charlie Chaplin 4 Panorama 5 Dame Nellie Melba 6 Marilyn Monroe 7 Caernarvon 8 Captain Matthew Webb 9 Chris Evert 10 165 Eaton Place 11 Alan Shepard 12 Beatrix Potter.

LORD ARCHER

1 Samuel Beckett, the Irish playwright, author of *Waiting for Godot*. He played for Trinity College, Dublin vs Northamptonshire 2 Albert Finney in 1958 3 Rudyard Kipling, who refused to receive it from his cousin, Stanley Baldwin 4 *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell; *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee 5 Caravaggio 6 Sir John Mills in *Ryan's Daughter* 7 Jefferson and Adams, second and third Presidents of the United States, on July 4 (Independence Day), 1826, 50 years to the day after they signed the Declaration of Independence 8 Paris 9 E.N.T.—eight, nine, ten 10 Prince Harry

Kipling, who refused to receive it from his cousin, Stanley Baldwin 4 *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell; *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee 5 Caravaggio 6 Sir John Mills in *Ryan's Daughter* 7 Jefferson and Adams, second and third

Presidents of the United States, on July 4 (Independence Day), 1826, 50 years to the day after they signed the Declaration of Independence 8 Paris 9 E.N.T.—eight, nine, ten 10 Prince Harry

DAME JUDI DENCH

1 Clan Douglas. The Red Douglases and the Black Douglases 2 George IV 3 1708, 1715, 1719 and 1745 4 Deacon Brodie 5 Francis II of France; Lord Darnley; the Earl of Borthwell 6 Saint Margaret 7 The Macdonalds and the Campbells 8 James IV 9 John Brown 10 Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (Liberal); Sir Alec Douglas-Home (Conservative); Ramsay MacDonald (Labour).

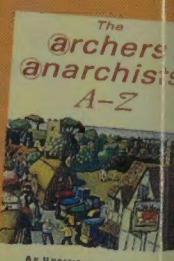
DICK FRANCIS

1 1780 2 One and a half miles (but only one mile 1780-83) 3 The race is for three-year old horses only 4 a Miss Emily Davison 5 Anner 5 Derby; Newmarket; Grand National: Gatwick 6 HRH The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) 7 Golden Miller in 1934 8 ESC 9 a 16 b 14 (so horses jump 30 times) 10 Esha Ness ridden by John White.

SUSAN HILL

1 Pooh, with a honey pot stuck on his head (from AA Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*) 2 a Mary Lennox in *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett b Tom in *Tom's Midnight Garden* by Philippa Pearce 3 Wombles (from the books about the Wombles of Wimbledon by Elizabeth Beresford) 4 Helen Bannerman; Black Mumbo and Black Jumbo 5 a Dinah b Its grin 6 Five and Seven from the books by Enid Blyton 7 Max; Maurice Sendak 8 *The Old Man of Lochnagar* 9 One of the two bad mice in Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Two Bad Mice*. The other was Tom Thumb 10 Mike TV, Verruca Salt, Violet Beauregard, Augustus Gloop in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl.

This guide reveals the hilarious and subversive truth behind events in *The Archers*, as seen by Archers Anarchists, dedicated fans of the radio soap, who claim that Ambridge is a real village. (Boxtree, £6.99)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION, from page 39

ACROSS: 1 Biggest 5 Party 8 Bemused 12 Shepherds 13 Gold rings 14 Tosca 15 Estonian 17 Melchior 18 Contacted 21 Kneel 22 Seven 24 Heartless 26 Taster 29 Carton 31 Hallibut 33 Panorama 34 Overflow 35 Mediate 36 Expect 38 Siesta 40 Malvoisie 43 Inane 45 Actor 48 Presently 52 Idolatry 53 Seal skin 54 Price 56 White wine 57 Millennia 58 Theatre 59 Toast 60 Windsor DOWN: 1 Bushel 2 Greetings 3 Enhance 4 Tarmac 5 Post 6 Russia 7 Yoga 8 Bulged 9 Miracle 10 Sentiment 11 Desire 16 Note 17 Mess 19 Turtle-doves 20 Celebration 23 Stephen 25 Snowman 27 Those 28 Roast 29 Chess 30 Rifle 31 Ham 32 Toe 37 Pantomime 39 Stockings 41 Aisy 42 ILLs 44 Nearest 46 Colleen 47 Nitwit 48 Praise 49 Enigma 50 Yellow 51 Unfair 54 Pelt 55 Emir



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